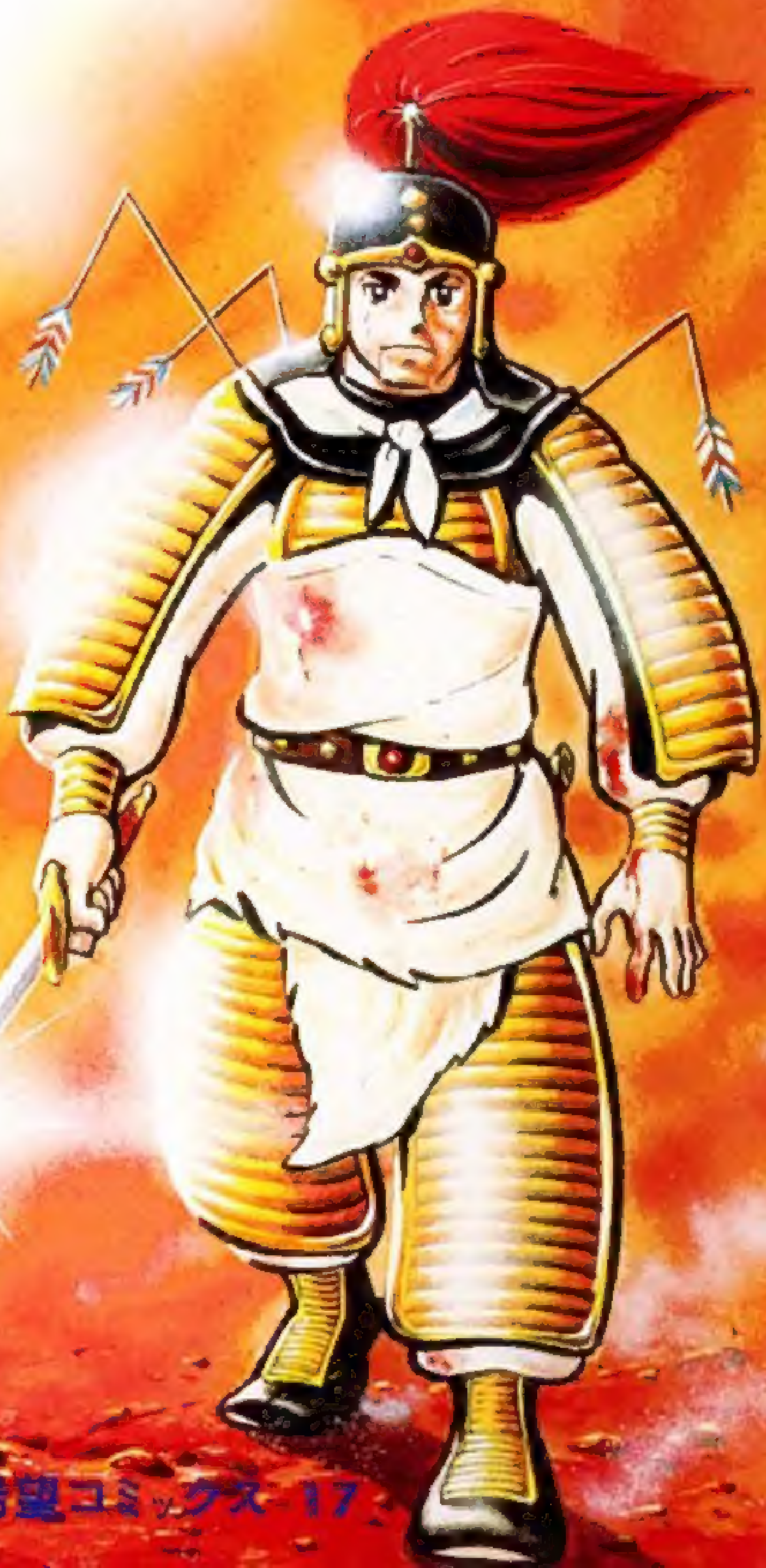
三国志（さんごくし）②

黄巾賊退治

横山光輝



希望コミックス 17

SANGOKUSHI

2

DECIMATION OF THE YELLOW SCARF REBELS

YOKOYAMA MITSUTERU

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SANGOKUSHI
(ROMANCE OF THE
THREE KINGDOMS)

三国志

VOLUME 02
DECIMATION OF THE
YELLOW SCARF REBELS

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〔月刊『希望の友』掲載〕

FIRST BATTLE

WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL.

THE GOVERNOR WOULD LIKE TO MEET YOU. PLEASE, COME THIS WAY.

ALRIGHT, THEN I SHALL LEAVE MY SWORD IN YOUR CARE.

AH! BUT YOU MUST FIRST LEAVE YOUR WEAPONS HERE.

HERE!

THIS MAN'S SWORD AIN'T NORMAL EITHER...

AGHHH!
GWAA!

NOW THIS WAY, PLEASE.

I'M JUST GLAD THOSE GUYS ARE ON OUR SIDE...

HOW THE HELL DOES HE CARRY THIS HEAVY THING AROUND AS IF IT WERE A LIGHT WOODEN STICK?
HNGH

AND THOSE TWO WITH HIM LOOK QUITE STRONG AS WELL.

LOOK AT THAT YOUNG MAN'S GALLANT FORM.

IT'S A PLEASURE TO HAVE YOU ARRIVE. I AM LIU YAN, THE GOVERNOR OF YOUZHOU.

AND I AM ZHANG FEI YIDE.

GUAN YU YUNCHANG

I AM LIU BEI XUANDE.

THE YELLOW SCARF REBELS ARE WREAKING HAVOC UPON THIS WORLD RIGHT NOW AND NO LONGER COULD WE JUST SIT BY AND WATCH. EVEN IF IT IS JUST A LITTLE, WE WOULD LIKE NOTHING MORE THAN TO BE OF SERVICE TO THIS COUNTRY.

YES, SIR. AFTER LOOKING AT THE NOTICE PUT UP IN MY HOMETOWN RECRUITING PEOPLE FOR THE ARMY, I DECIDED TO RAISE A VOLUNTEER ARMY MYSELF.

I HEARD THAT YOU HAVE RAISED A VOLUNTEER ARMY?

OHH!

THOSE ARE VERY REASSURING WORDS TO HEAR. IF ONLY THERE WERE MORE MEN LIKE YOU IN THIS WORLD, THE YELLOW SCARVES WOULD BE NO LONGER MORE.

YES, SIR.

THANK YOU, LIU BEI. PLEASE GIVE YOUR ALL FOR THIS COUNTRY.

WE WOULD LIKE YOU TO PARDON ZHANG FEI FOR HIS CRIME AGAINST HARMING OUR OWN SIDE'S SOLDIERS.

HMM?

THERE IS ONE REQUEST THAT WE HAVE, GOVERNOR.

YES...

SO YOU WERE THE ONE WHO KILLED A FEW OF THE CITY GUARDS?

WELL, IT IS FINE THEN. THE BLAME PARTLY LIES WITH US FOR FALSE ACCUSATION AND IF YOU ARE WILLING TO GIVE YOUR LIFE TO THIS COUNTRY, I SHALL PARDON YOUR CRIMES.

YES, SIR.

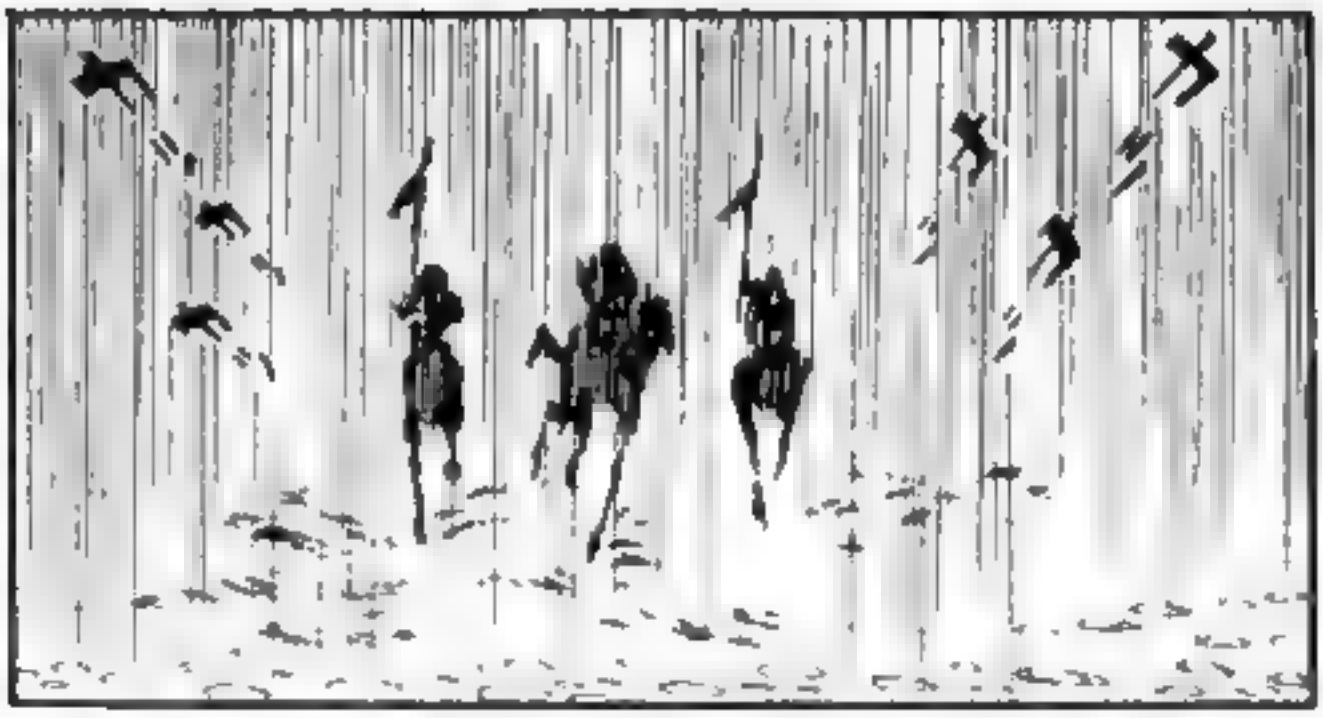
AND YOU WERE ALSO THE 808 CORPSE GENERAL WHO WORKED FOR THE KOU FAMILY?

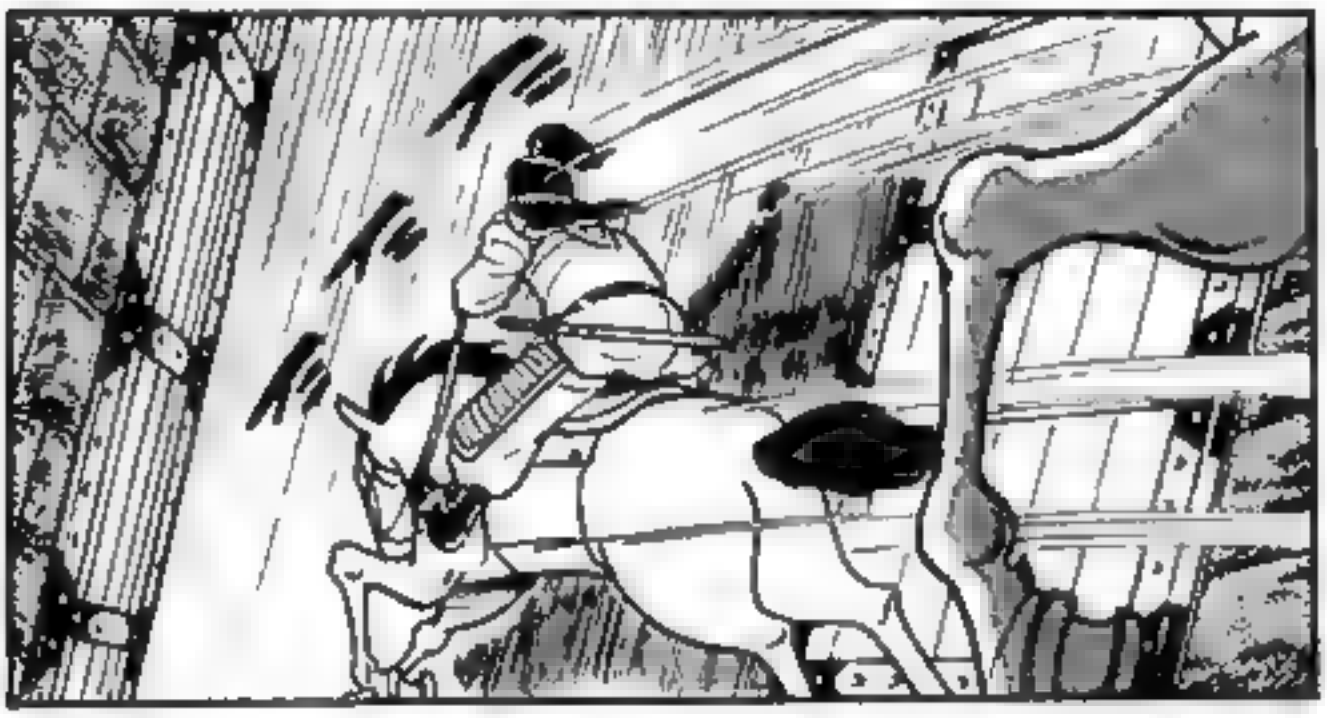
THANK YOU.

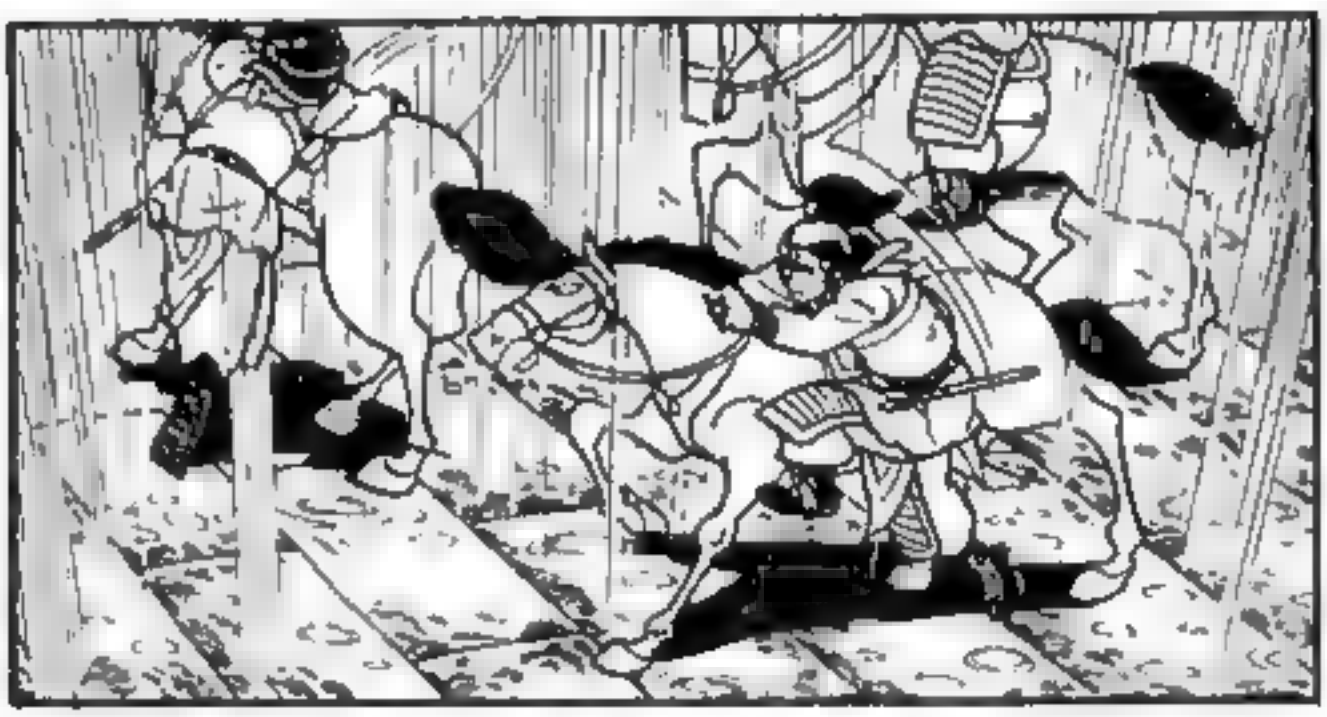
WE CAN'T BE DOING NOTHING WHEN THESE BRAVE MEN JUST OFFERED TO GIVE THEIR LIVES FOR THIS COUNTRY!

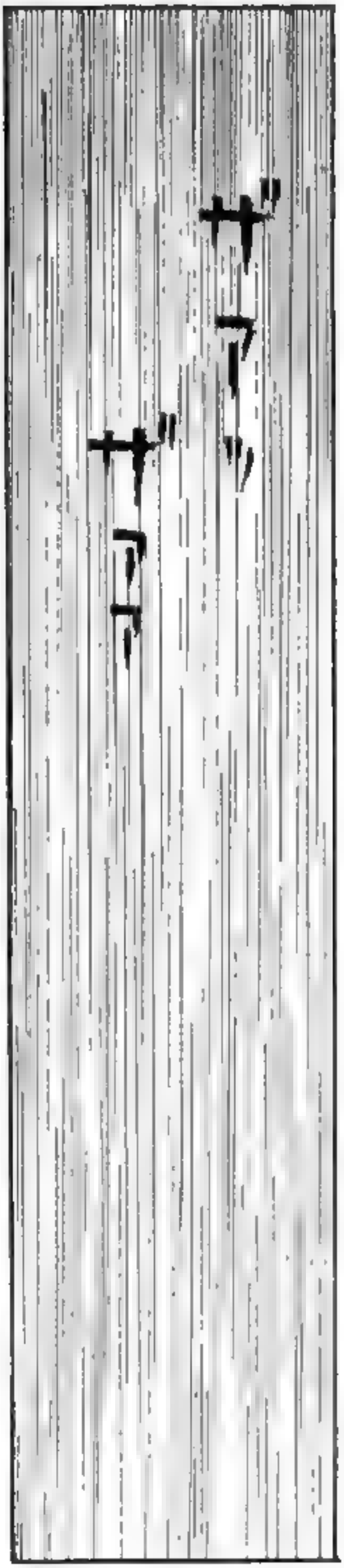
WELL THEN, PREPARE THE TABLES!

AND THUS ZHANG FEI'S CRIMES WERE PARDONED AND LIU BEI'S VOLUNTEER ARMY RECEIVED A CORDIAL WELCOME FROM THE GOVERNOR HIMSELF



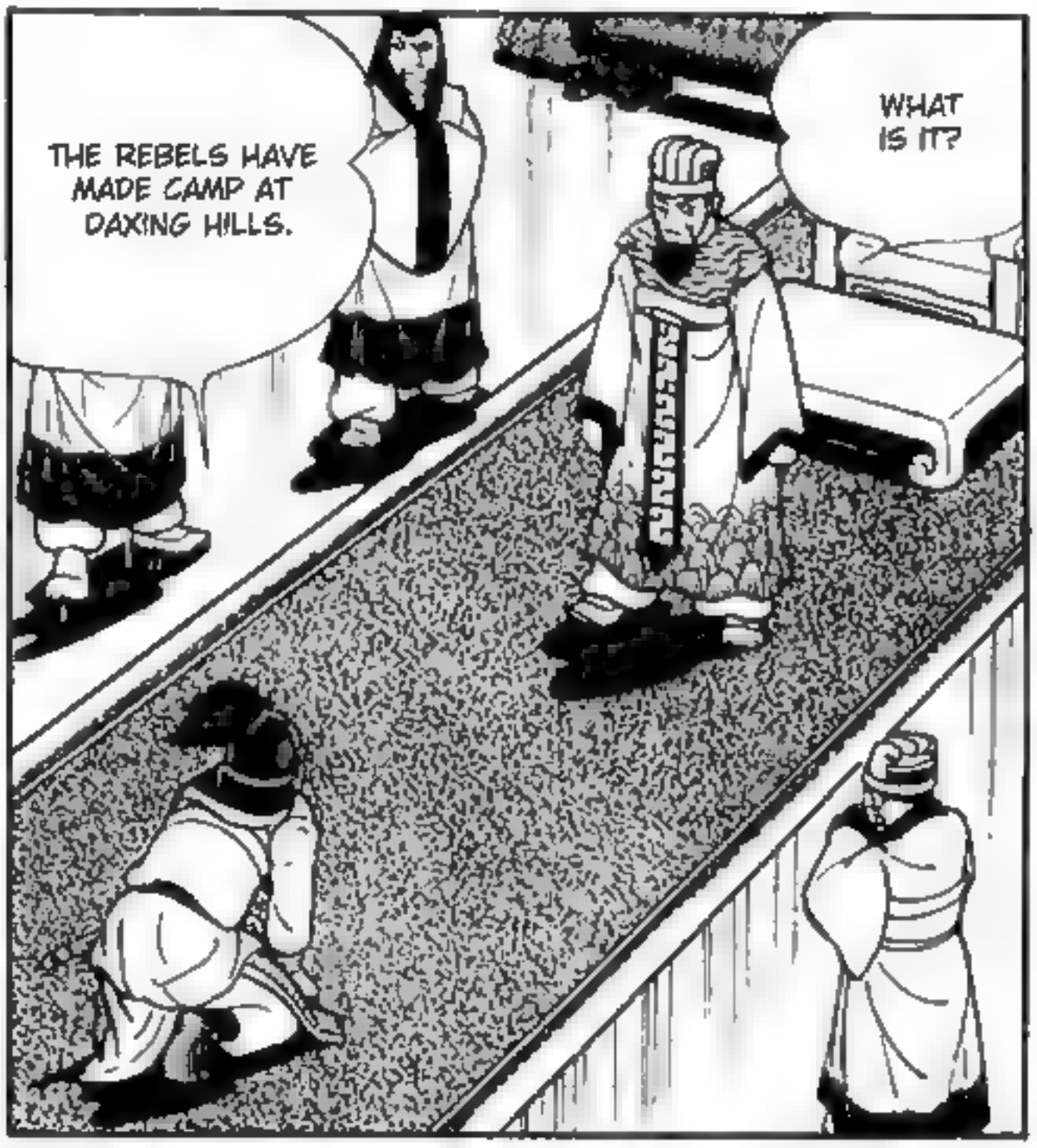


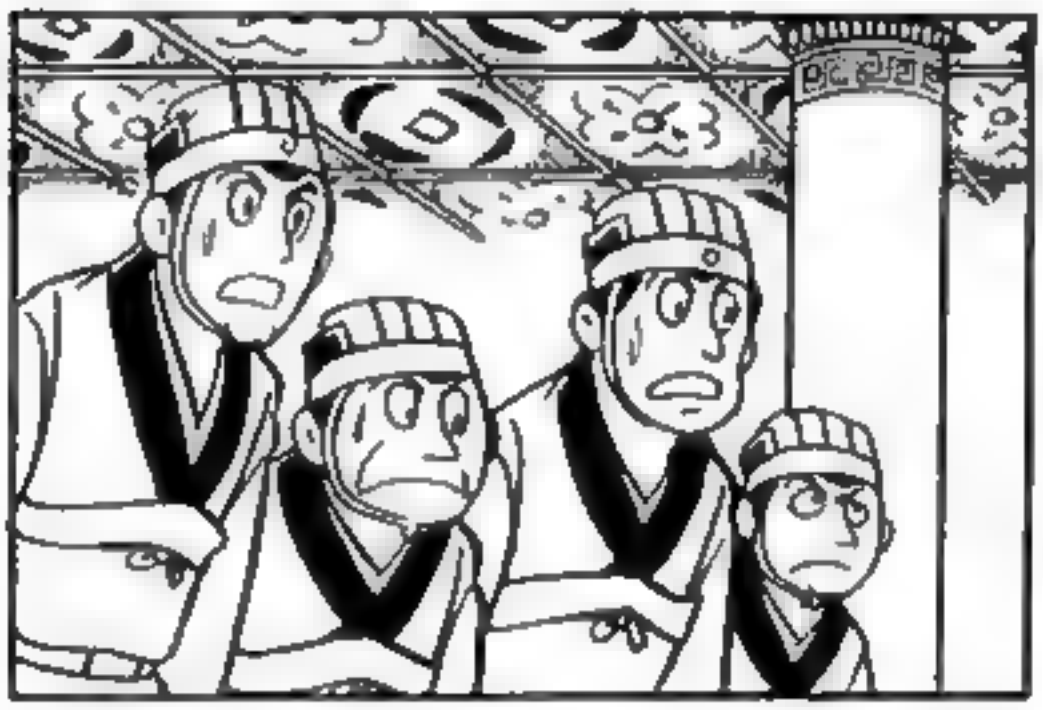




WE HAVE A REPORT!

WHAT!


THE REBELS HAVE MADE CAMP AT DAXING HILLS.
WHAT IS IT?



APPROXIMATELY 50,000, SIR.

AND JUST HOW MANY DO THEY NUMBER?

SIR!

CAPTAIN ZOU JING!

NNGH! DAMN THOSE YELLOW SCARVES...

BROTHER LIU BEI, I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE BEST FOR US TO ALSO PARTICIPATE IN THE BATTLE.

I WAS THINKING THE SAME THING.

YES, SIR.

LEAD YOUR FORCES IMMEDIATELY AND DESTROY THE REBELS.

AH, WHAT IS IT, LIU BEI?

GOVER-NOR!

OH, YOU WISH TO GO AS WELL RIGHT NOW?

WE WOULD LIKE TO ASSIST WITH THE BATTLE.

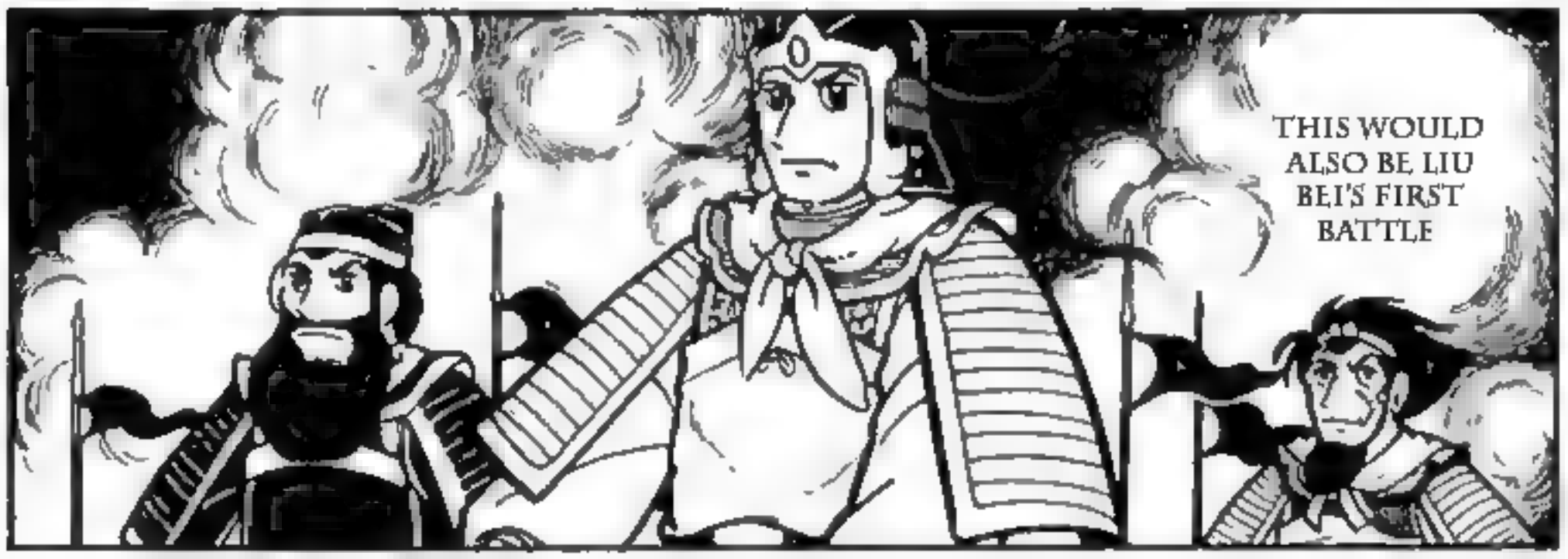
HEH HEH. MY BODY WHICH HAS BEEN ITCHING FOR A FIGHT FOR SO LONG IS NOW TREMBLING IN ANTICIPATION.

YES, SIR.

THEN PLEASE, BY ALL MEANS DO SO. I WISH YOU SUCCESS.

AND SO LIU YAN'S FORCES WENT TO THE DAXING HILLS TO DEFEAT THE YELLOW SCARF REBELS

AND ON THE VANGUARD WERE LIU BEI'S VOLUN TEER ARMY COMPOSED OF ORDINARY CITIZENS NOW WIELDING SWORDS AND SPEARS FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THEIR LIVES


THIS WOULD ALSO BE LIU BEI'S FIRST BATTLE

DAXING
HILLS

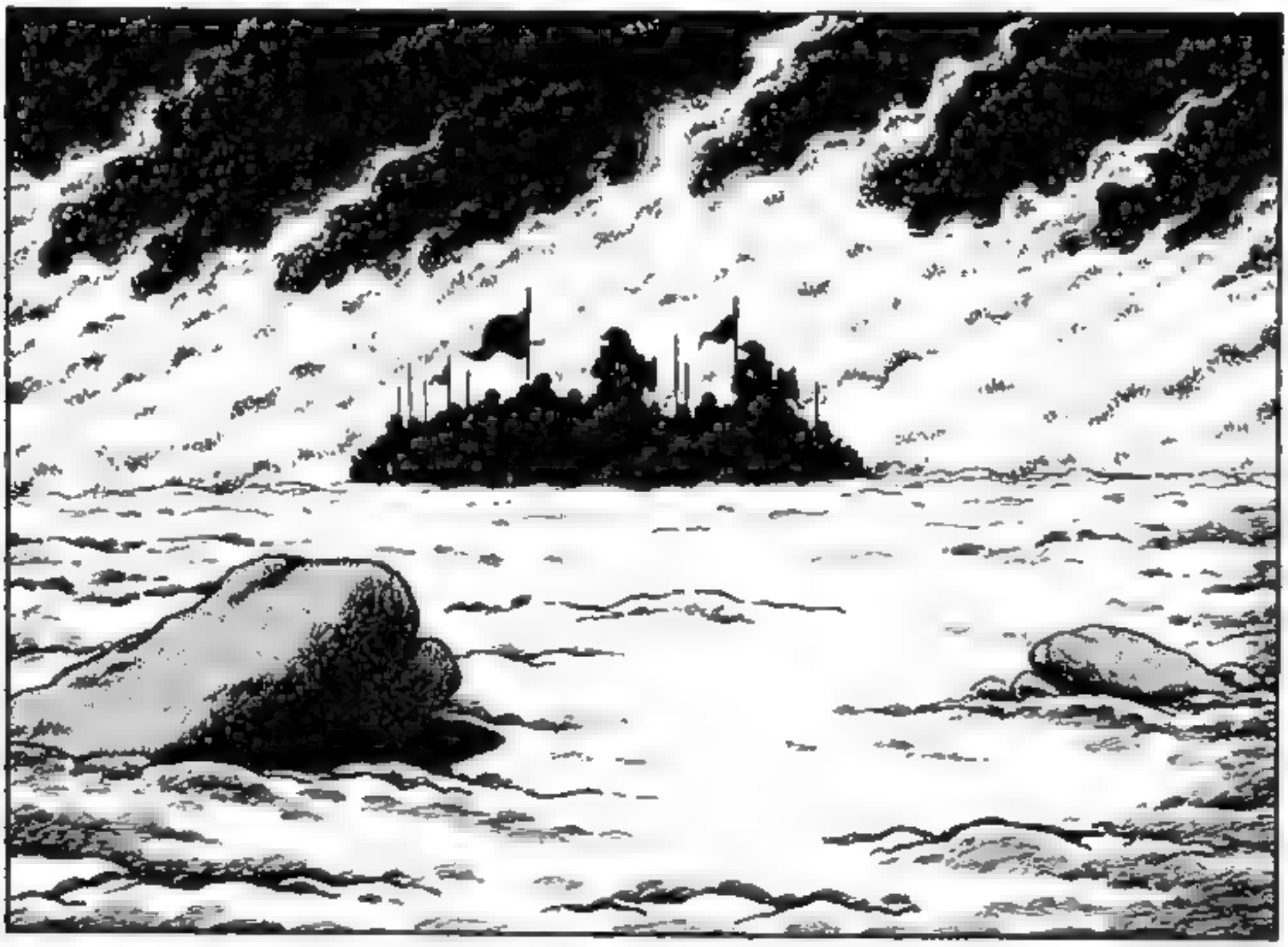
BOSS!

SOLDIERS FROM YOUZHOU HAVE APPEARED.
WHAT?

DENG MAO, GO SHOW THEM HOW POWERFUL WE ARE.

WHAT!?

OHH, SO THAT'S THEM?



T-THOSE ARE THE FORCES FROM YOUZHOU!?

AHH...

HUH?

THOSE BEGGARS ARE OUR ENEMIES?

HEE HEE, I... I CAN'T STOP LAUGHING!!

GAHAHA HAHAHA!

HA!

WELL, THIS IS A SURPRISE. ARE THEY REALLY SUPPOSED TO BE THE VAGUARD FOR THE YOUZHOU?

AHAHA AHAHA!

BROTHER LIU BEI, HOW SHOULD WE ATTACK?

I'M THINKING OF THAT RIGHT NOW. HMM, CAPTAIN ZOU JING WILL ALSO BE WATCHING HOW THIS BATTLE PROGRESSES...

BECAUSE IF IT DRAGS ON, THEY'LL CALL IN OTHER YELLOW SCARVES IN NEARBY PROVINCES AND WILL BLOCK OUR ESCAPE ROUTE TO COMPLETELY ANNHILATE US.

THIS BATTLE MUST NOT BE DRAGGED OUT FOR LONG.

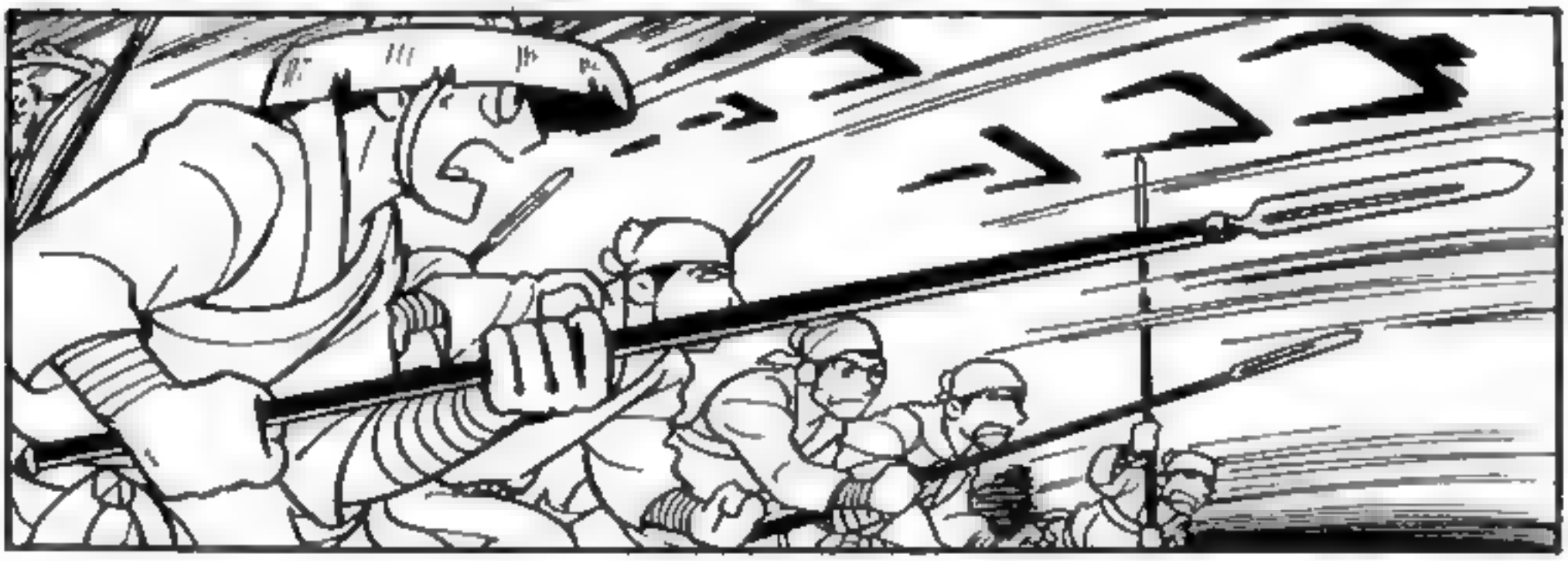
AS YOU HAVE EXCELLENTLY PUT IT, I ALSO THINK THE SAME.

SO WE MUST END IT BEFORE THEY HAVE A CHANCE TO CONTACT THEIR OTHER FORCES... WHAT DO YOU THINK, GUAN YU?

ALRIGHT, I'VE DECIDED.

THEY'LL ONLY GAIN THE ADVANTAGE THE LONGER THIS BATTLE GOES ON. LET US END THIS DECISIVELY AND QUICKLY.

CHARGE!!!



THEY'RE JUST A PATHETIC VOLUNTEER ARMY COMPOSED OF PEASANTS. I'LL EASILY MASSACRE THEM.

ALRIGHT, I SHALL GO OUT TOO THEN.

HMM, BRAVELY ATTACKING US HEAD ON, EH?

ALRIGHT, FOLLOW MY LEAD MEN!!

AND SO COMMANDER CHENG YUANZHI AND HIS SECOND IN COMMAND, DENG MAO, BOTH LED THE ATTACK.

IT'S BECAUSE THEY'RE LOOKING DOWN ON US.

HAHAHA! BROTHER GUAN YU, THE ENEMIES ARE ATTACKING HEAD ON AS WELL!

THEY WERE BOTH SKILLED WITH THE SWORD BUT UNDERESTI MATING LIU BEI'S FORCES WOULD BE THEIR DOWNFALL.

THEN LET THIS ZHANG FEI SHOW HOW FEARSOME WE REALLY ARE.

HMM?

OR HAS HE ALREADY RAN AWAY WITH HIS TAIL BETWEEN HIS LEGS!?

ALRIGHT, WHICH ONE OF YOU IS THE LEADER!?

AND I, DENG MAO, THE SECOND IN COMMAND, SHALL DO SO TOO!

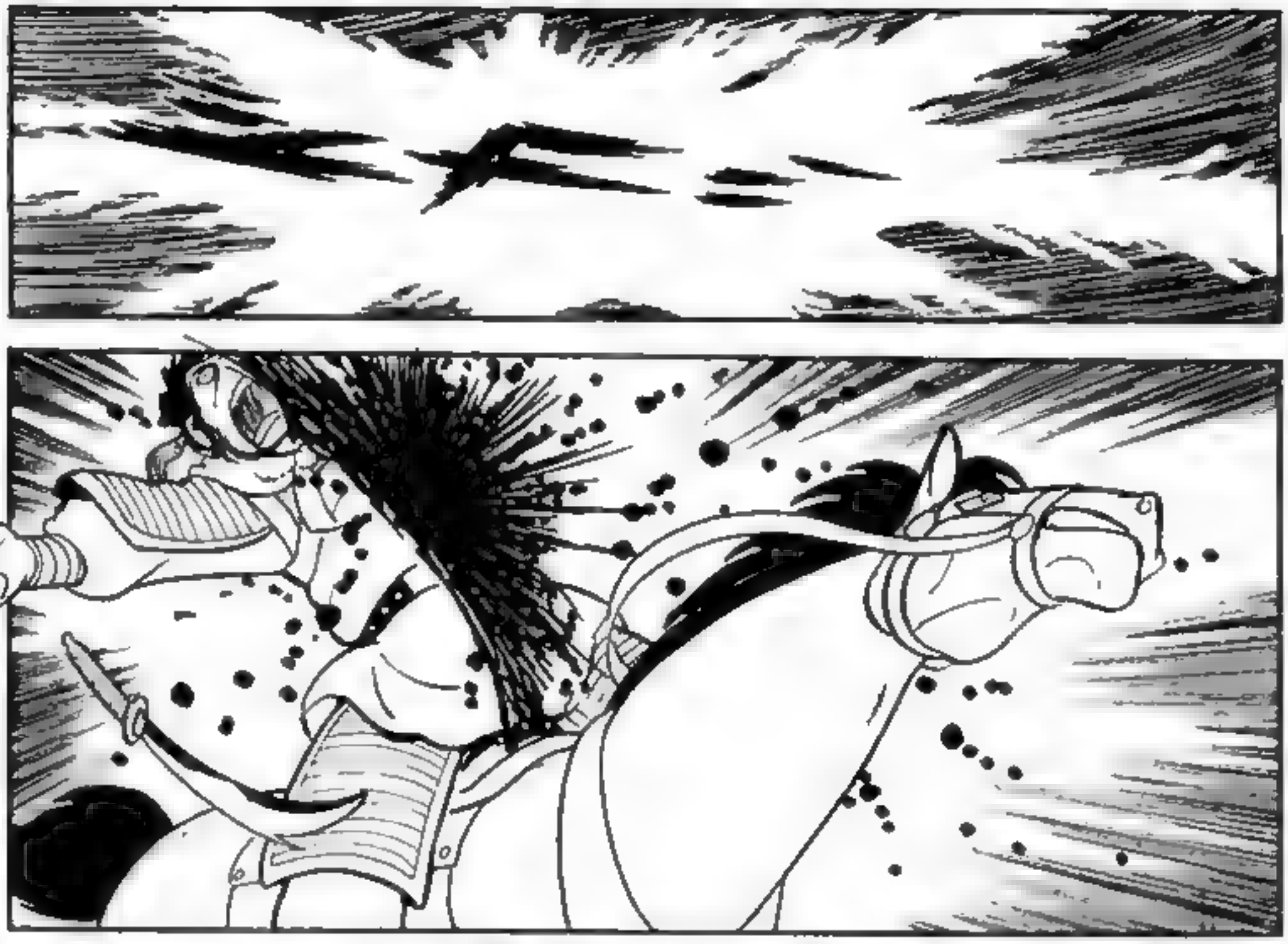
HMPH, SUCH BIG WORDS COMING FROM A MERE SOLDIER OF A VOLUNTEER ARMY! I, COMMANDER CHENG YUANZHI, SHALL BE YOUR OPPONENT THEN!

UNDERSTOOD.

ZHANG FEI, I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE SECOND IN COMMAND.

HERE I COME YOU MEASLY REBEL!

JUST A RUNT WHO HAS YET TO SEE THE REAL WORLD... NOW DIE!!



RUN AWAY! NOTHING GOOD WILL COME OF FIGHTING MONSTERS LIKE THEM!

BOTH OUR COMMANDER AND SECOND IN COMMAND WERE KILLED OFF WITHIN THE BLINK OF AN EYE!

GAHH!

YOU WERE FREE TO DO WHATEVER YOU WANT UNTIL NOW SO EVEN IF I KILL YOU NOW, YOU SHOULD BEAR NO REGRETS!

BASTARDS! RUNNING AWAY WITHOUT A FIGHT!?

YES... THEY ARE FEARFUL WARRIORS INDEED...

CAPTAIN ZOU JING, DID YOU SEE THEIR FIGHTS JUST NOW?

ALRIGHT, CHARGE!

LET US NOT WASTE THIS CHANCE.

THOSE TWO MEN ALONE HAVE MANAGED TO LEAVE THE REBELS IN DISARRAY.

WE'RE DONE FOR!!

AGHHH!

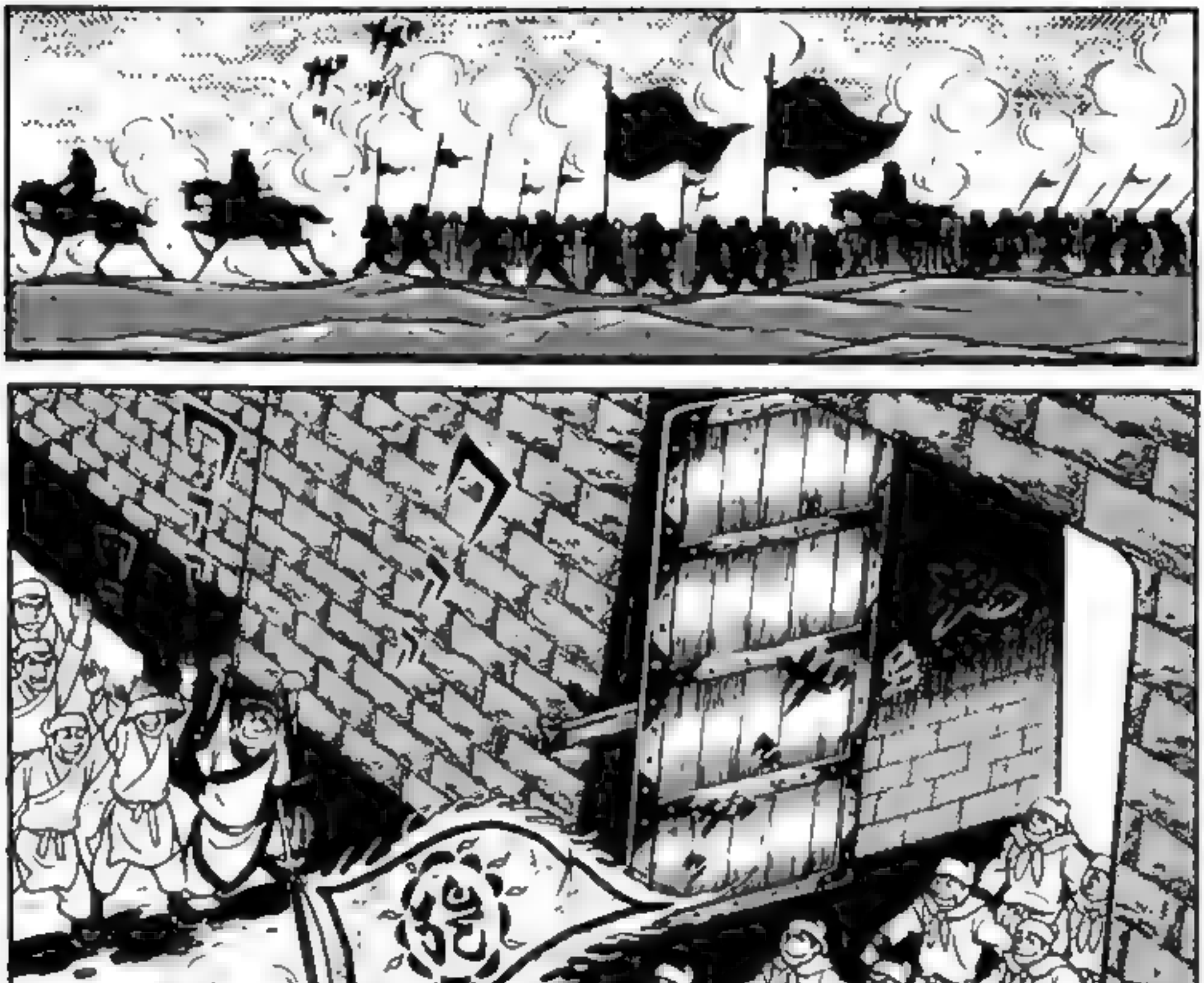
HAVING LOST BOTH THEIR COMMANDER AND SECOND IN COMMAND, THE REBELS WERE AS DIS-ORIENTATED AS A HEADLESS CHICKEN THE BATTLE WAS SETTLED IMMEDIATELY

AROUND 10,000 REBELS WERE KILLED

MANY TENS OF THOUSANDS SUR RENDERED AND THE REMAINING SCATTERED AND RAN AWAY

AND SO ENDED LIU BEI'S FIRST BATTLE.

REINFORCEMENTS TO QINGZHOU



IT FEELS GREAT TO KNOW THAT THE REBELS HAVE BEEN CRUSHED!

GOOD GOING!

THE BEGGAR CORPS ARE THE BEST!!

I SEE.

GOVERNOR, CAPTAIN ZOU JING AND LIU BEI HAVE RETURNED.

WE HAVE SAFELY RETURNED.
ZOU JING, BACK AT YOUR SERVICE SIR.

I HAVE ALSO HEARD THAT LIU BEI'S VOLUNTEER ARMY WAS EXCEPTIONALLY SUCCESSFUL.

YOU TWO HAVE SCORED A SPLENDID VICTORY.

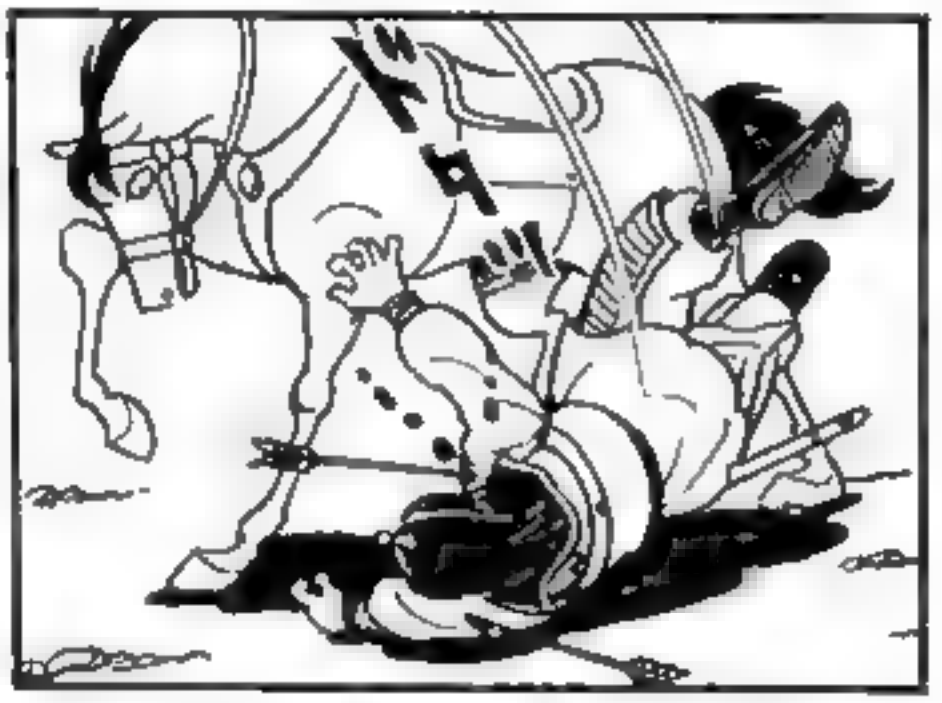
MAY YOU BE IN FOREVER GOOD HEALTH, CAPTAIN ZOU JING!
CONGRATULATIONS LIU BEI!

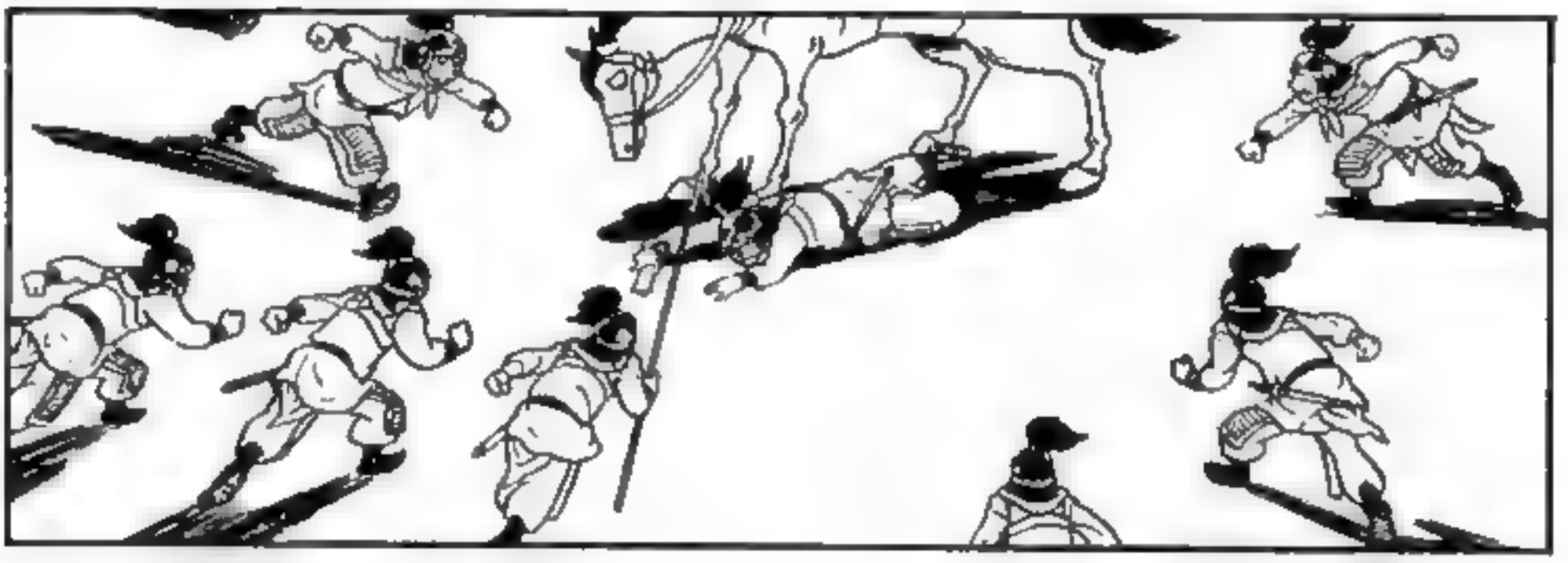
NOW, LET US DRINK AND CELEBRATE THE BRAVE WARRIORS!

AH!

HALT! WHO GOES THERE!?

I...I HAVE AN URGENT REPORT FROM THE GOVERNOR OF QINGZHOU.





?

GOVER-
NOR!

AHAHAHA!

I HEARD YOU TOOK DOWN THE R LEADER WITH JUST ONE BLOW!

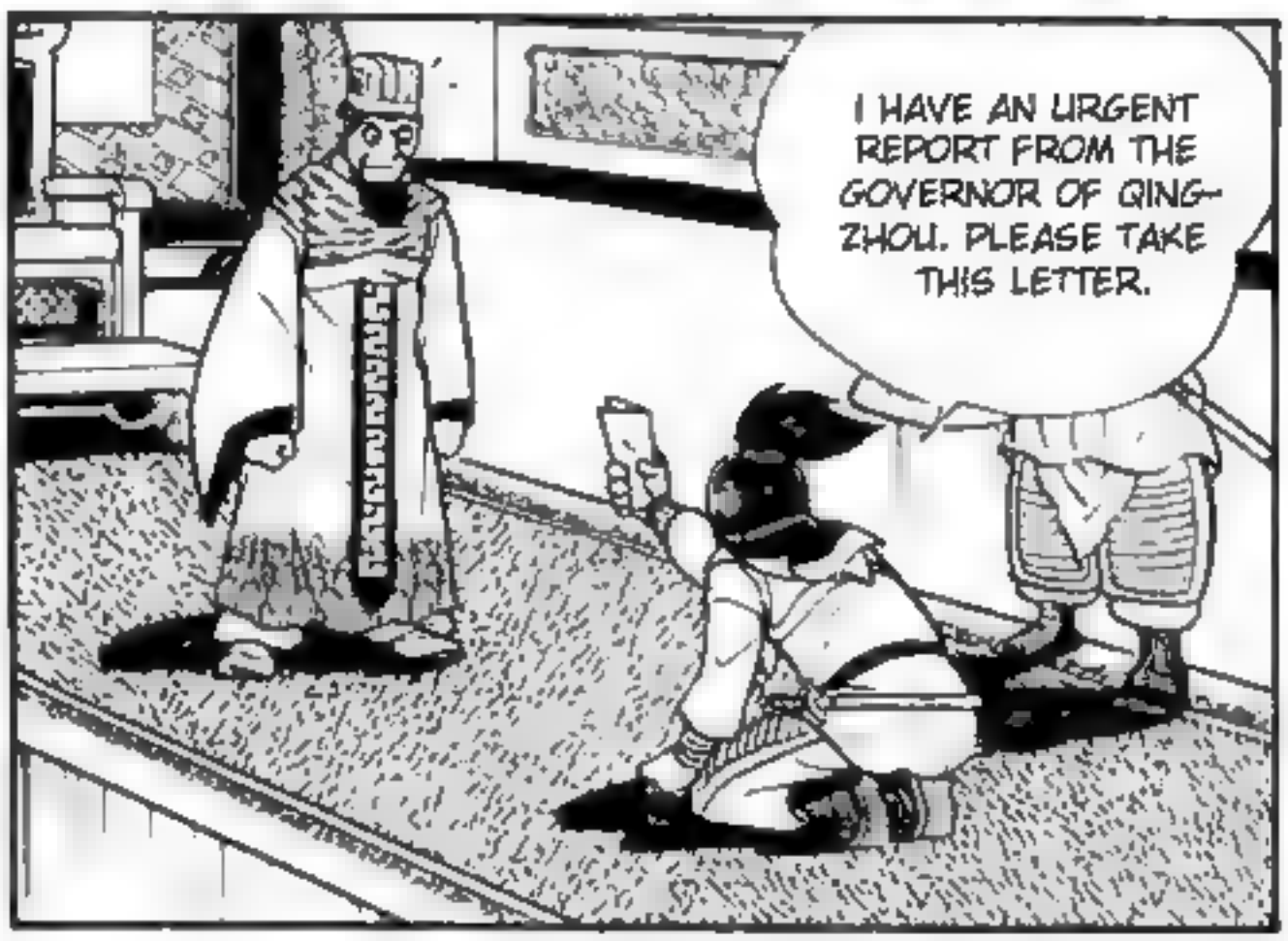
SINCE WE HAVE SUCH STRONG WARRIORS AS YOU, WE CAN FINALLY SLEEP PEACEFULLY.

WHAT!

WHISPER WHISPER

BRING HIM IN.

AH!


I HAVE AN URGENT REPORT FROM THE GOVERNOR OF QING-ZHOU. PLEASE TAKE THIS LETTER.

CAPTAIN ZOU JING!

THE QINGZHOU CASTLE IS SURROUNDED BY THE REBELS ON ALL SIDES AND IS ON THE VERGE OF COLLAPSING. THEY REQUEST REINFORCEMENTS.
WHAT IS IT SIR?

GOVERNOR, WE SHALL LEAVE FOR QINGZHOU AS WELL THEN.

YES, SIR.
I APOLOGIZE FOR NOT GIVING TIME TO RECUPER-ATE BUT PLEASE TAKE 5000 MEN AND ASSIST THE FORCES AT QINGZHOU IMMEDIATELY.

OUR VOLUNTEER ARMY WAS ASSEMBLED TO FIGHT THE REBELS AND SO WE SHALL FIGHT.

BUT YOU'VE JUST RETURNED FROM A BATTLE AND YOUR MEN AREN'T ACTUAL SOLDIERS OF THE OFFICIAL ARMY. THERE'S NO NEED TO PUSH YOURSELVES TOO MUCH.

THEN LET US GO NOW.

HAHA, OF COURSE NOT. AFTER ALL, DIDN'T WE SWEAR TO DIE ON THE SAME DAY?

GUAN YU, ZHANG FEI, YOU HAVE NO PROBLEMS I PRESUME?

THEN I'LL JUST FINISH THIS DRINK BEFORE LEAVING.

WHAT RELI-ABLE MEN THEY ARE!

HAHA, THANKS FOR THE MEAL!

AFTER THEIR STUNNING VICTORY, THE MORALE OF THE VOLUNTEER ARMY WAS HIGH ENOUGH TO REACH THE HEAVENS

WITHOUT A MOMENT TO REST LIU BEI AND HIS ARMY WERE OFF TO THEIR SECOND BATTLE ALREADY

AH!

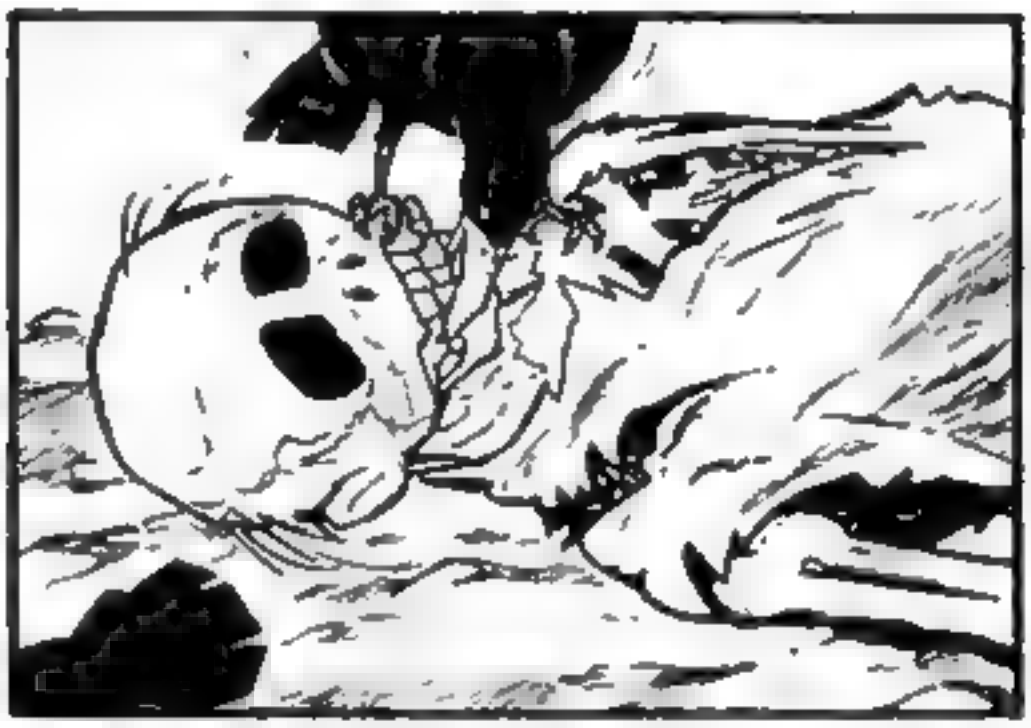
HALT! WAIT HERE FOR AWHILE.

T-THIS IS...

AHH!

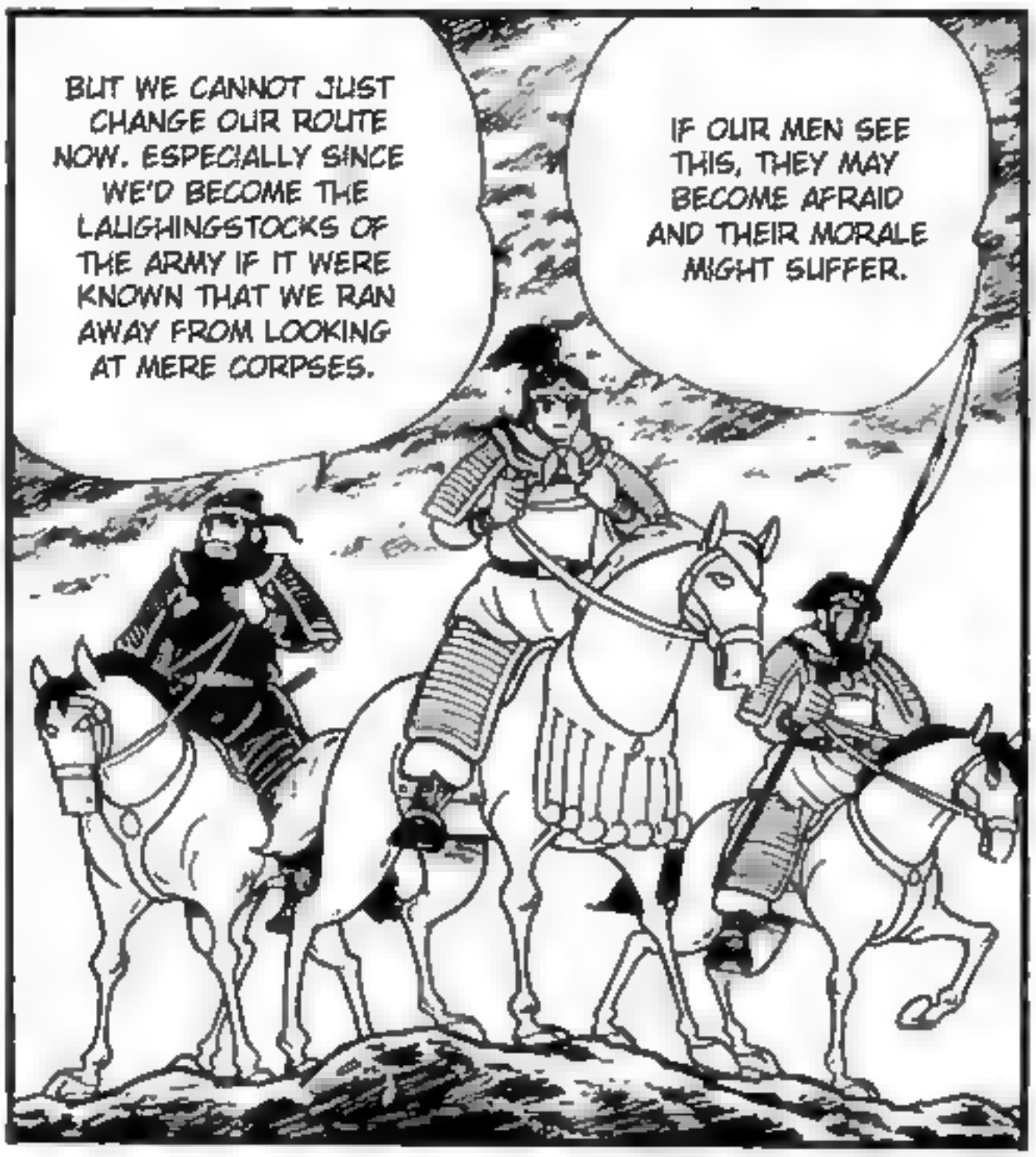
AHH!

IT IS LIKE A SCENE FROM HELL.
BROTHER LIU BEI, I DO NOT THINK OUR SECOND BATTLE WILL GO AS WELL AS OUR FIRST.



THAT IS TRUE...

ALRIGHT, MEN! MARCH ON!

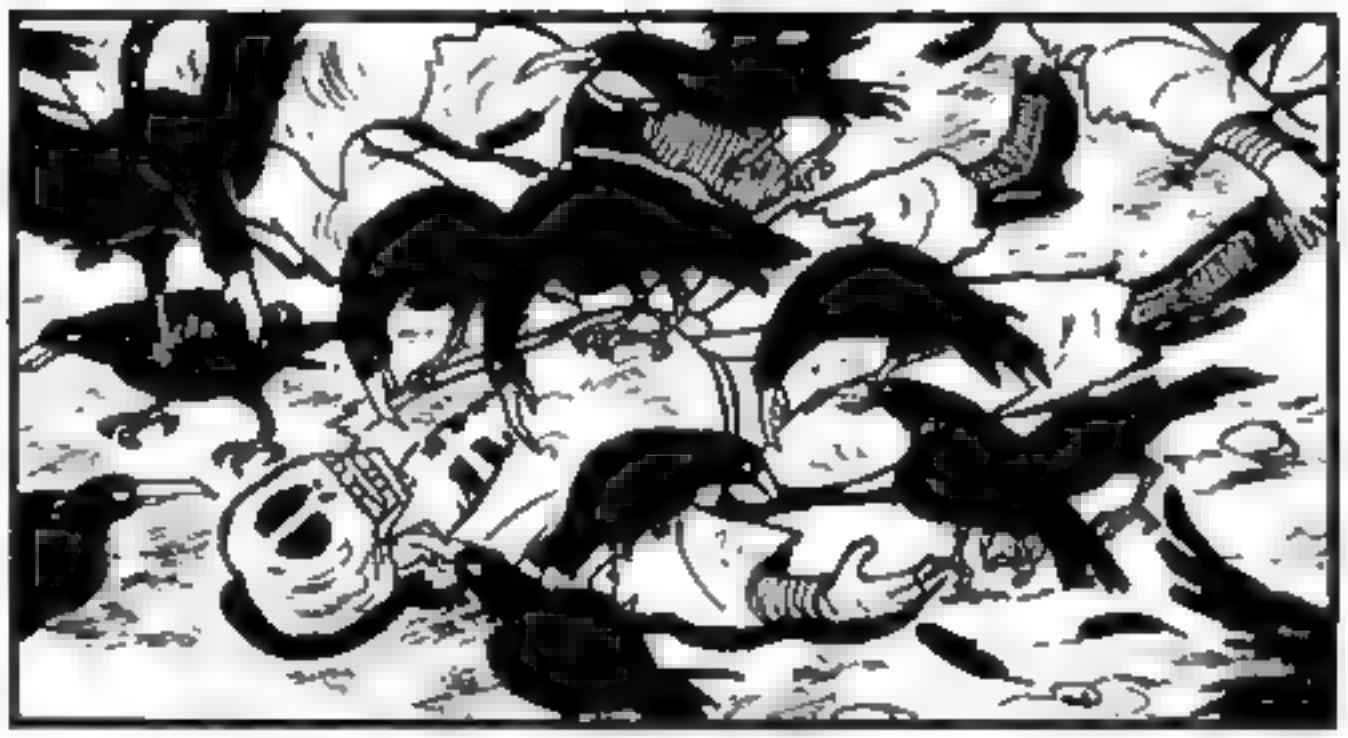

BUT WE CANNOT JUST CHANGE OUR ROUTE NOW. ESPECIALLY SINCE WE'D BECOME THE LAUGHINGSTOCKS OF THE ARMY IF IT WERE KNOWN THAT WE RAN AWAY FROM LOOKING AT MERE CORPSES.
IF OUR MEN SEE THIS, THEY MAY BECOME AFRAID AND THEIR MORALE MIGHT SUFFER.

RESUME MARCHING!

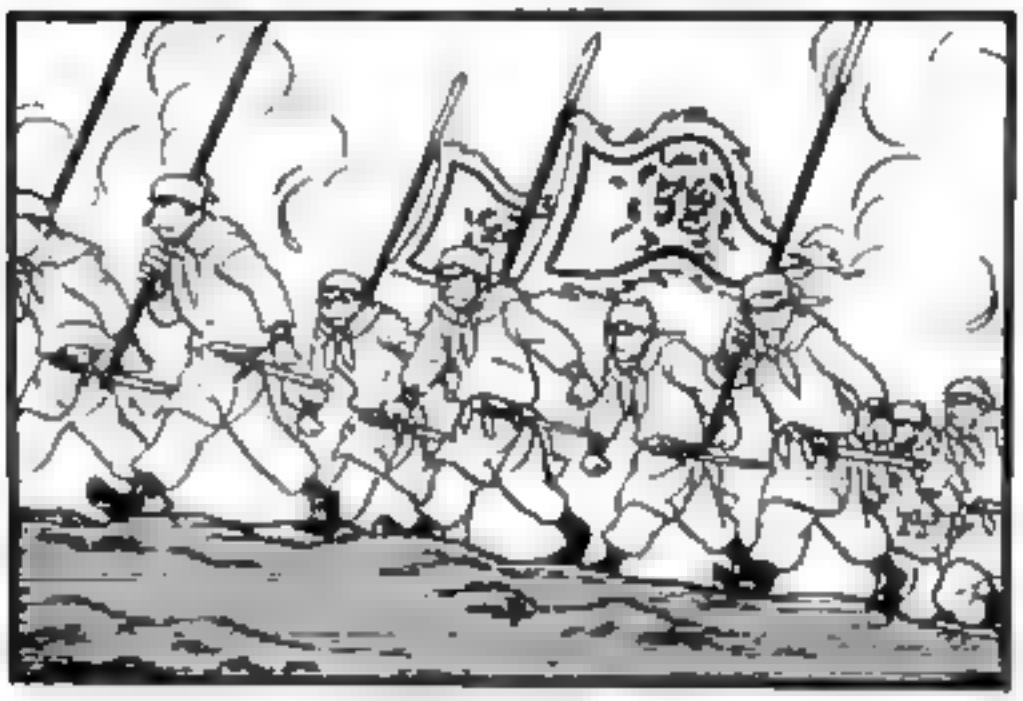
GUH!
AGH!

BARF

DAMN IT!!

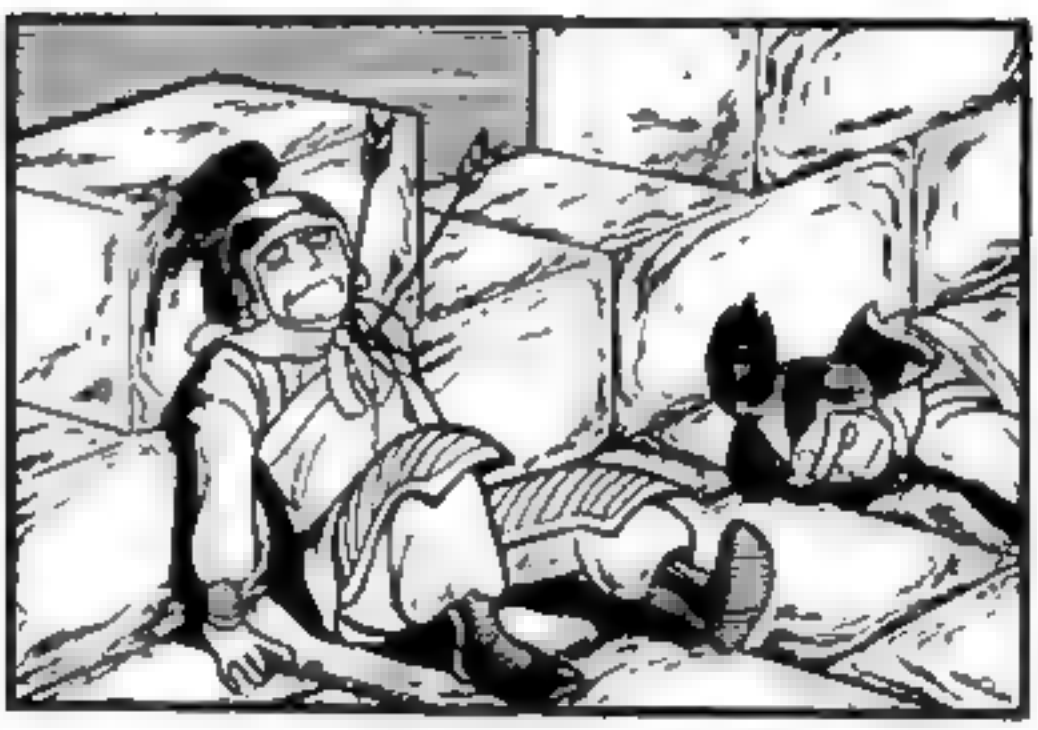


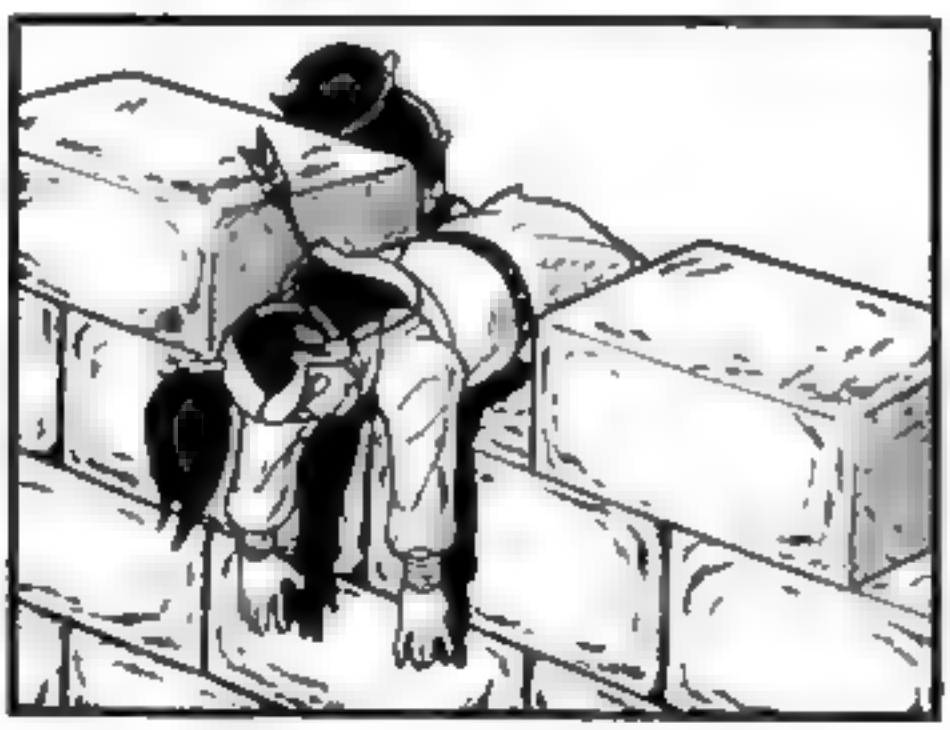
GO AWAY YOU DAMN CROWS!!

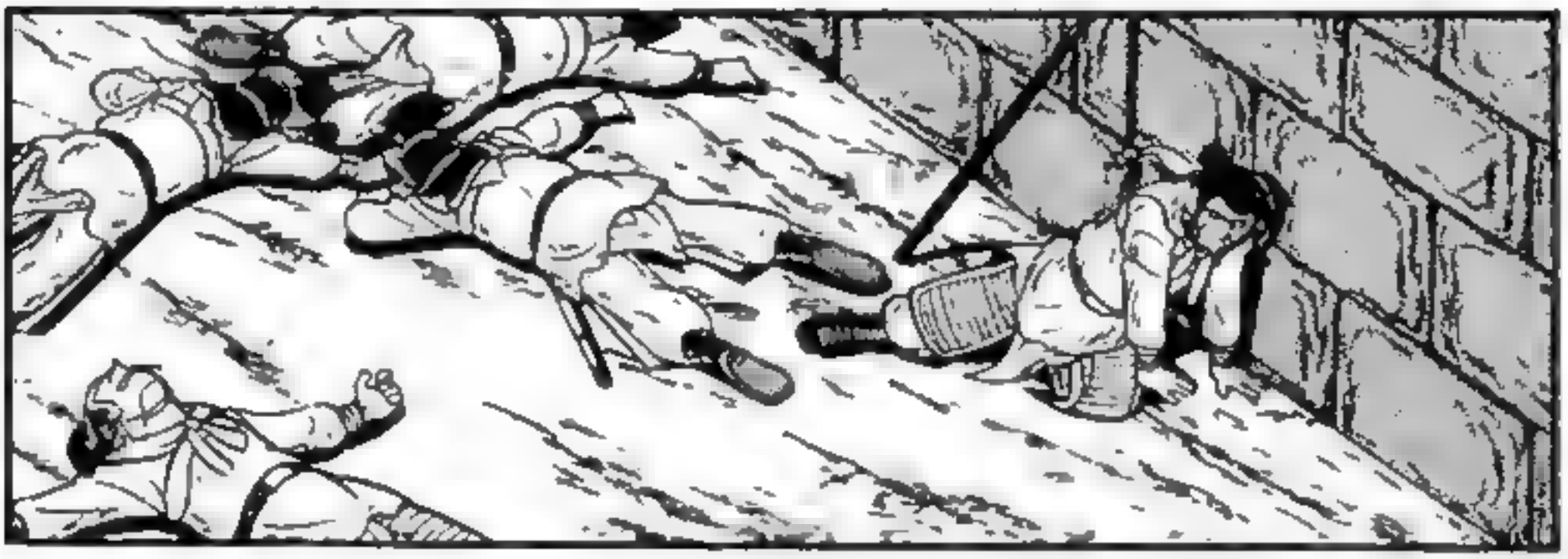


DON'T START SAYING OMINOUS THINGS NOW.
I WONDER IF WE'LL END UP THE SAME WAY...?

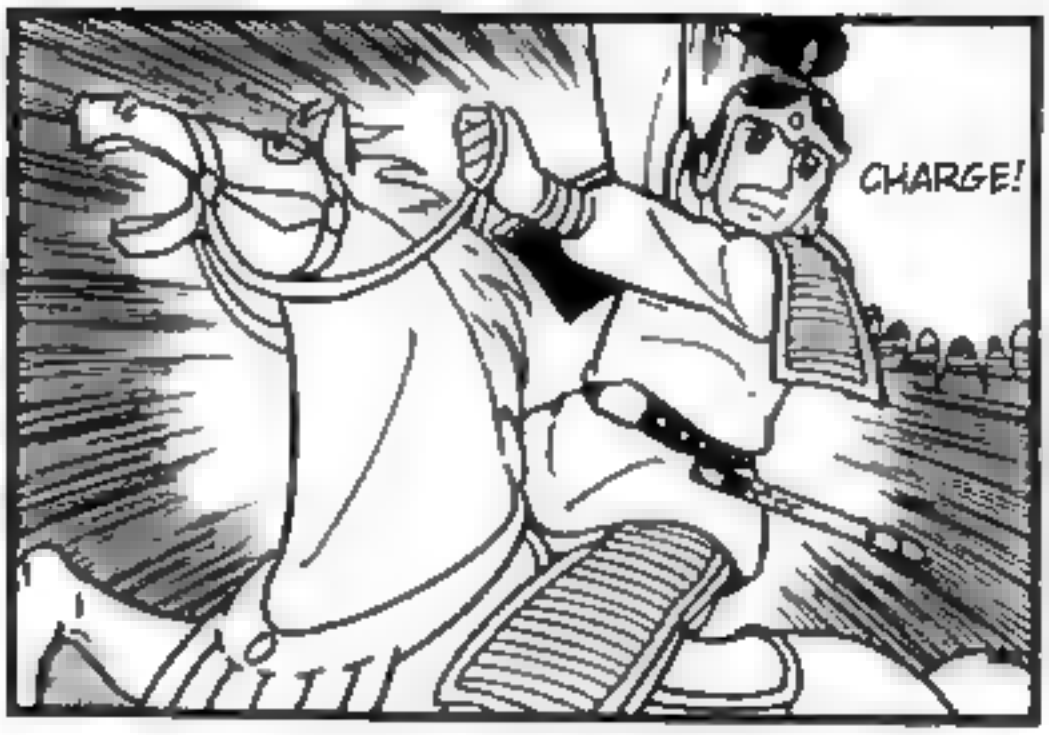
QING·
ZHOU
CASTLE







*FLAGS OF YELLOW SCARVES


CHARGE!

HAHA, TIME TO BAG MYSELF ANOTHER HEAD OF A COMMANDER!

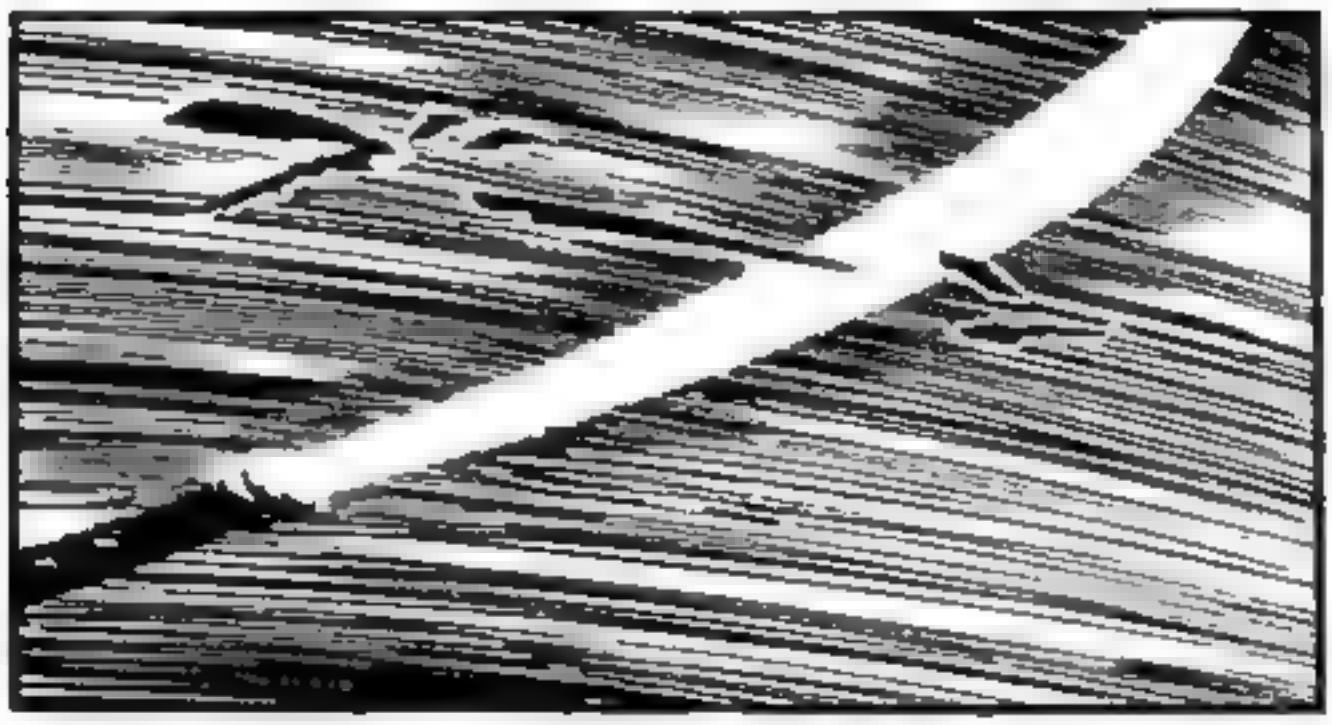
HMM...

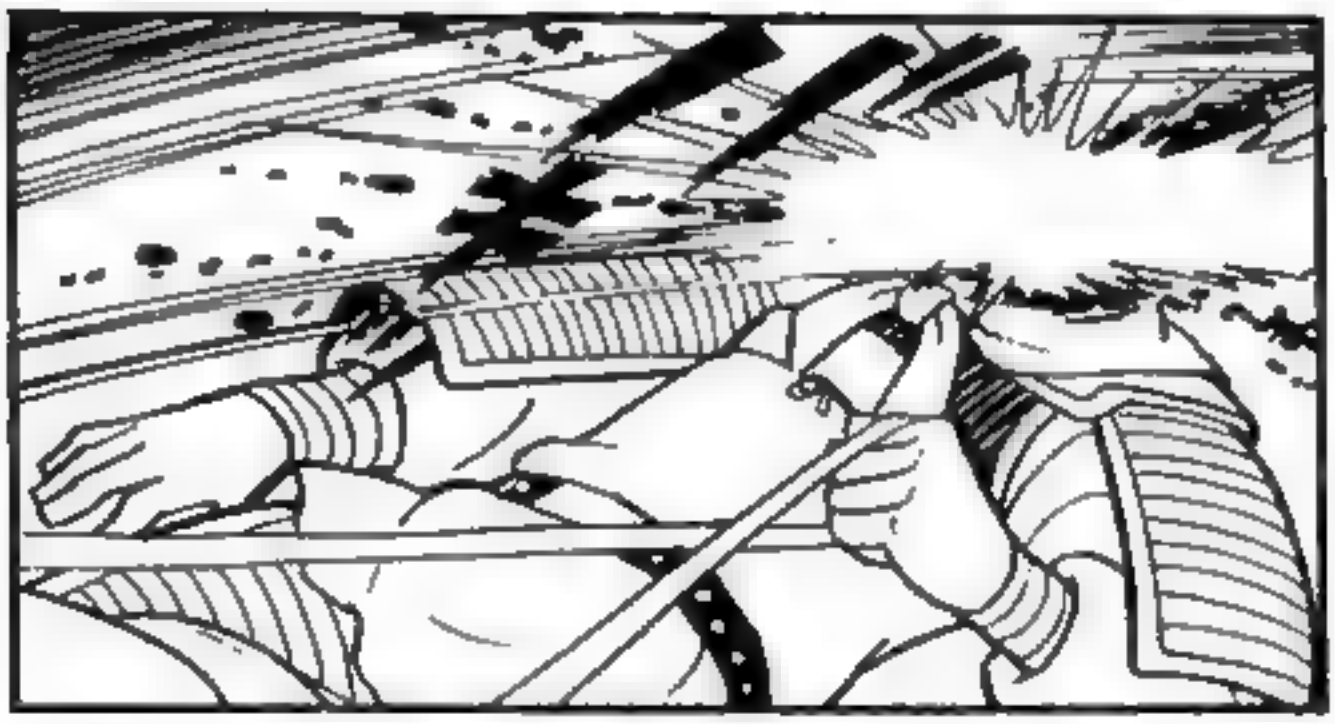
HAHAHA... THEY THINK THEY CAN OVERWHELM US WITH JUST THAT AMOUNT OF SOLDIERS?

SIR, ENEMY FORCES HAVE APPEARED!!

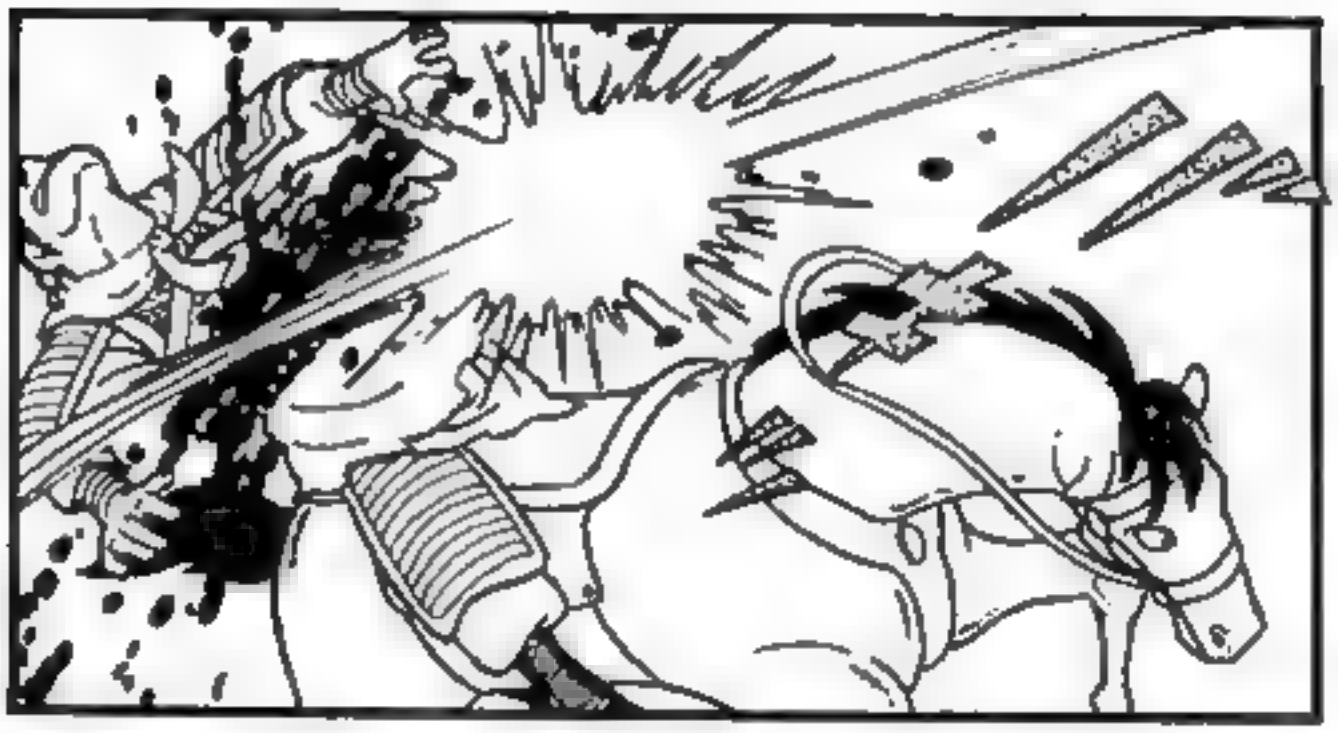
LET US DESTROY THEM, MY MEN!!

ヒラリ



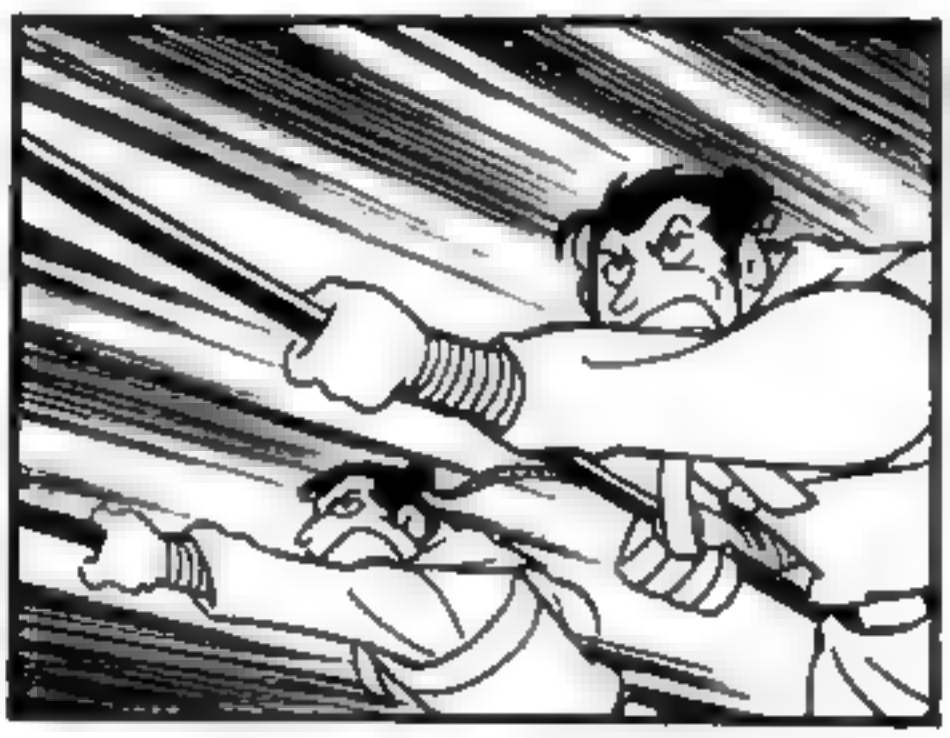


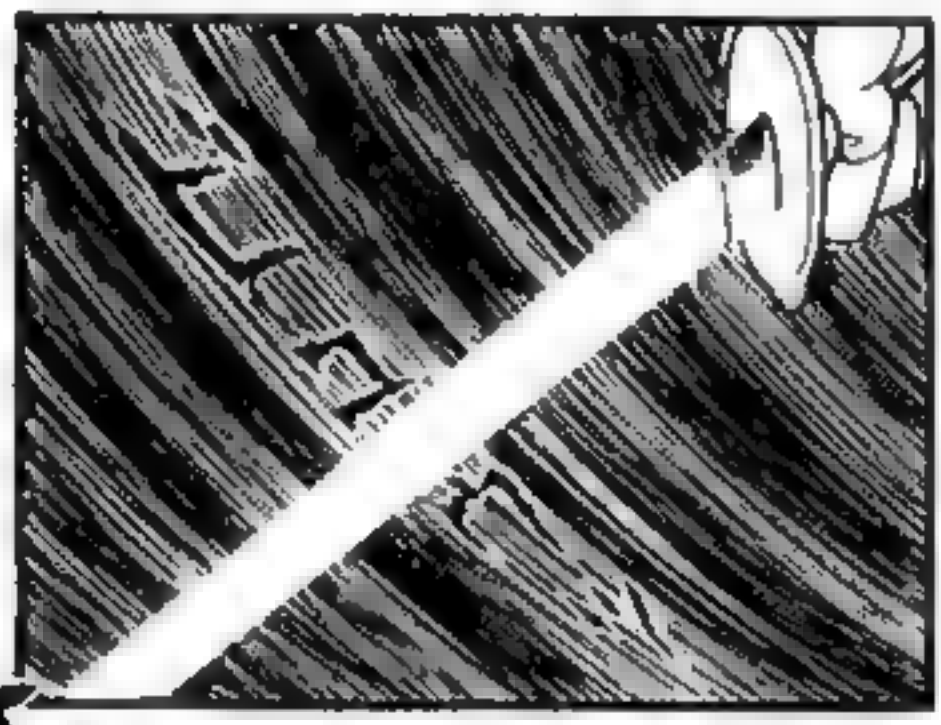
COME OUT. I SHALL KILL EVERY SINGLE LAST ONE OF YOU!!

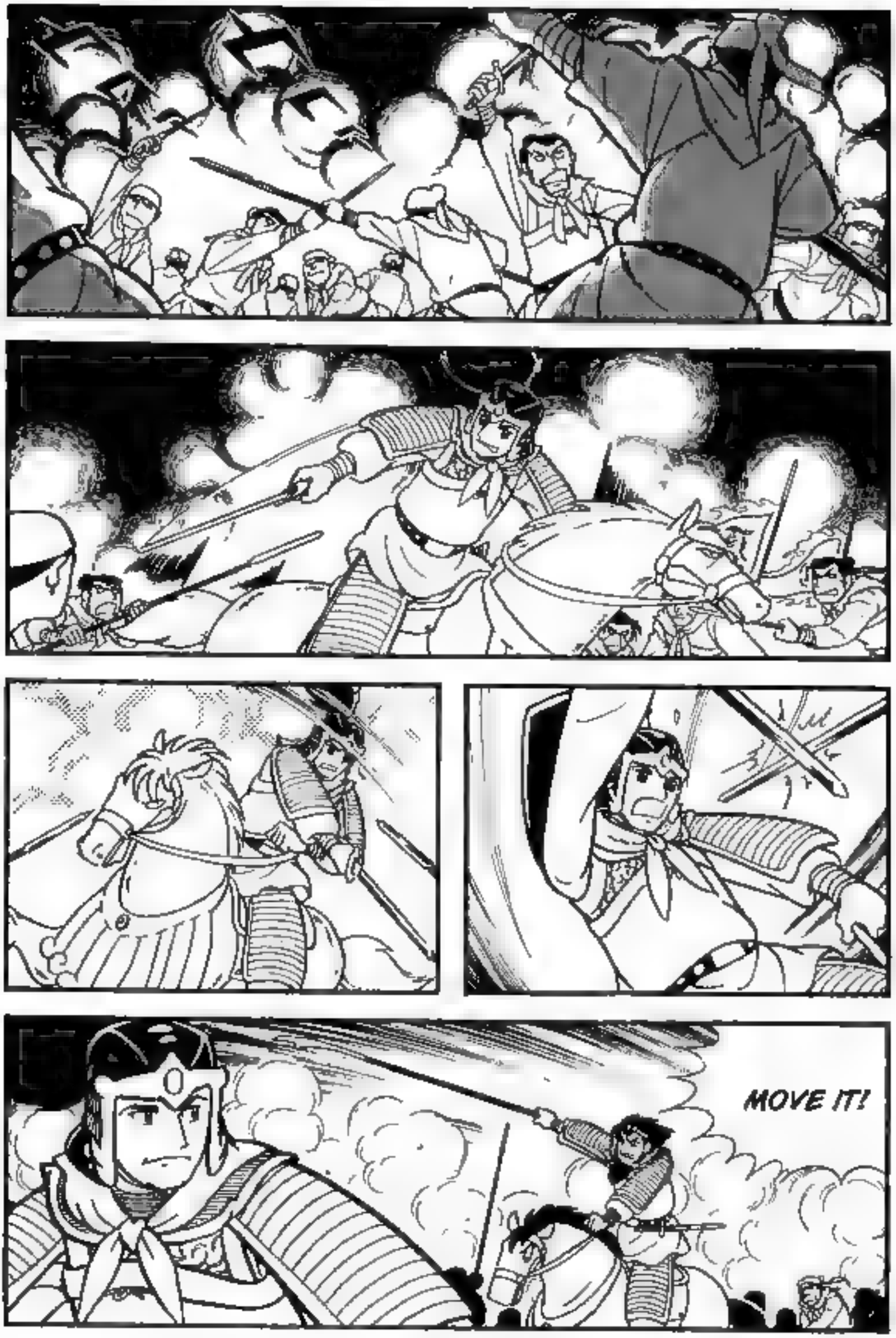


WHERE IS THE GENERAL!? GUAN YU SHALL BE THE ONE TO TAKE YOUR HEAD!!

YOU PITIFUL RUNTS CAN STEP ASIDE!






MOVE IT!

YOU MUST REALLY NOT VALUE YOUR LIVES!

IF WE DON'T PULL BACK SOON, WE'LL BE ANNHILATED FOR SURE.

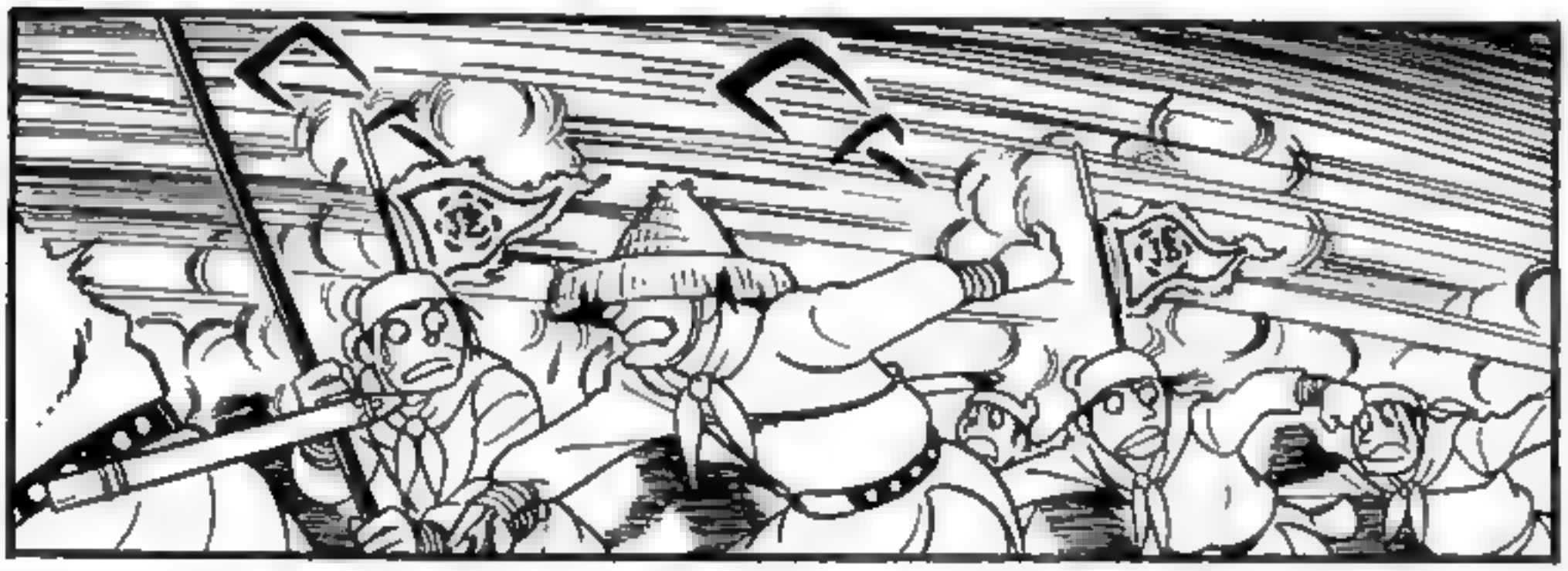
YES, THAT IS FOR THE BEST. LET'S GIVE THE SIGNAL TO RETREAT.

HMM?

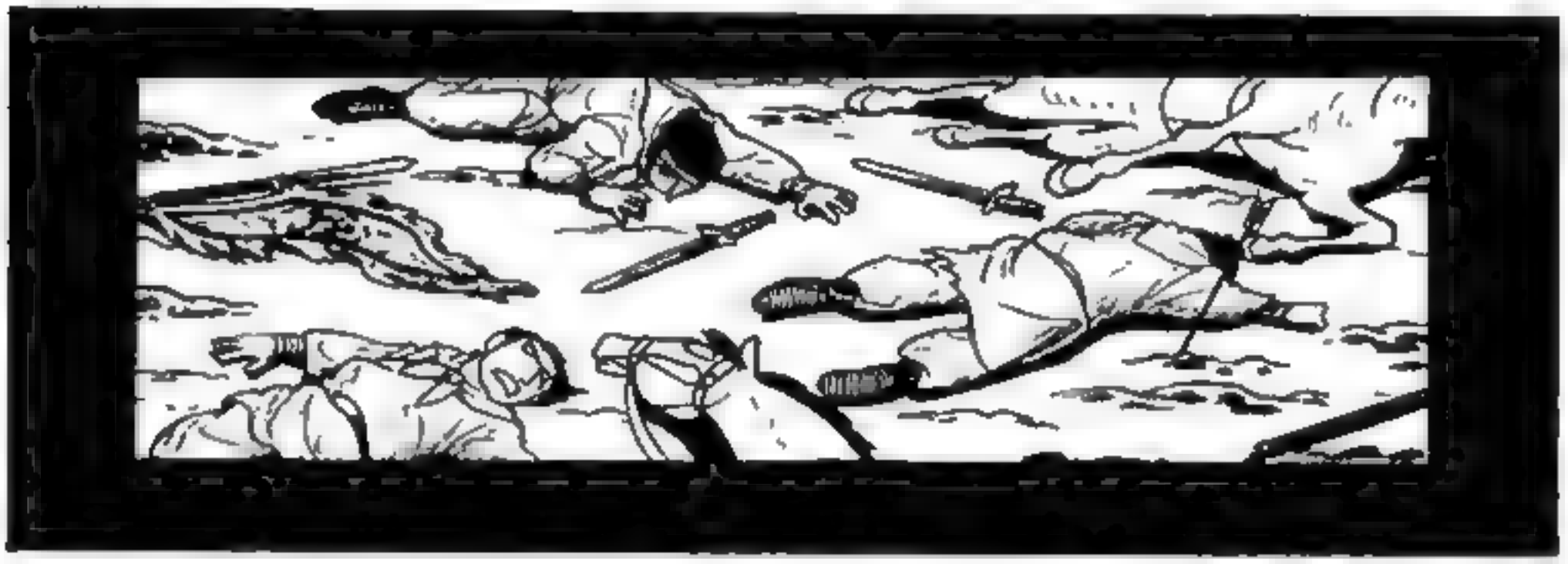
BROTHER LIU BEI! I THINK WE SHOULD WITHDRAW, WE ARE ON THE VERGE OF LOSING.

RETREAT!

RETREAT!
RETREAT!



UNLIKE THE FIRST BATTLE, THE SECOND BATTLE LEFT A FAIR BIT OF LIU BEI'S MEN DEAD



IT SEEMS WE GAINED QUITE THE NUMBER OF CASUALTIES.

HOW ABOUT WE TRY THIS METHOD...

WE MUST SET UP ANOTHER PLAN.

BROTHER, IF THIS CONTINUES, WE SHALL NOT WIN.

I SEE. THEN I SHALL CONSULT THE MATTER WITH CAPTAIN ZOU JING.

AH, LIU BEI.

COME IN.

ALRIGHT.

I WOULD LIKE TO MEET CAPTAIN ZOU JING.

YES.

THE ENEMY THIS TIME LOOKS TO BE MUCH TOUGHER THAN OUR LAST.

FIRST, WE SPLIT OUR FORCES INTO 3 GROUPS.

ANY IDEAS?

WHICH IS WHY I THINK A SPECIAL PLAN IS IN NEED.

I SEE, THIS PLAN MIGHT PROVE TO BE EFFECTIVE FOR OUR FORCES WHICH LACK IN NUMBER COMPARED TO THE REBELS.

MEANWHILE, WE SHALL ATTACK THEM AHEAD OF TIME FOR AWHILE AND THEN PRETEND TO RETREAT TO LURE THEM OVER HERE. ONCE WE'VE LURED THEM BACK FAR ENOUGH, GUAN YU AND ZHANG FEI WILL AMBUSH THEM FROM BOTH SIDES AND WE SHALL ALSO TURN AROUND AND ATTACK.

GUAN YU WILL COMMAND TROOPS TO THE RIGHT AND ZHANG FEI TO THE LEFT. THESE TWO GROUPS WILL SERVE AS THE AMBUSH.

BUT I WONDER IF THEY'LL CHASE AFTER US SO EASILY?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

THEN LET US CARRY THIS PLAN OUT.

YES, I BELIEVE THEY WOULD. THEY SHOULD HAVE GOTTEN COCKY AFTER DEFEATING MY VOLUNTEER ARMY IN THE SKIRMISH JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO.

AND SO THE TROOPS WERE SPLIT OFF INTO 3 GROUPS

AND ZHANG FEI WOULD ALSO LEAD A 1000 MEN LYING IN WAIT ON THE LEFT SIDE.

GUAN YU WOULD LEAD A GROUP OF 1000 MEN LYING IN WAIT ON THE RIGHT SIDE.

AND THE GROUP ATTACKING FROM THE FRONT WAS TO BE LED BY ZOU JING AND LIU BEI

BOSS, THEY'RE ATTACKING US AGAIN!

ALRIGHT MEN, ATTACK! AND THIS TIME, DON'T LET A SINGLE ONE ESCAPE!!

HAHA, LOOKS LIKE THEY HAVEN'T LEARNED THEIR LESSON YET.

蒼天已死
黃夫当立
歲在甲子
天下大吉

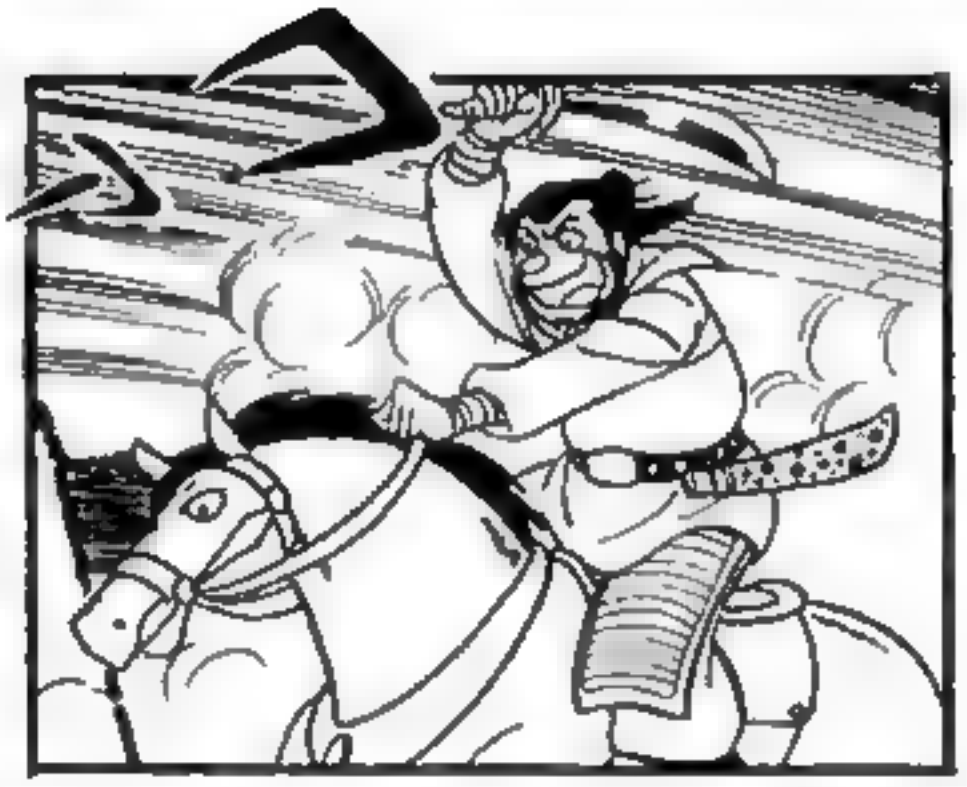
THE BLUE SKIES HAVE VANISHED. NOW IS THE TIME OF THE MEN OF YELLOW TO RISE UP. IN THIS YEAR OF JIA ZI, LET PEACE BE RESTORED!

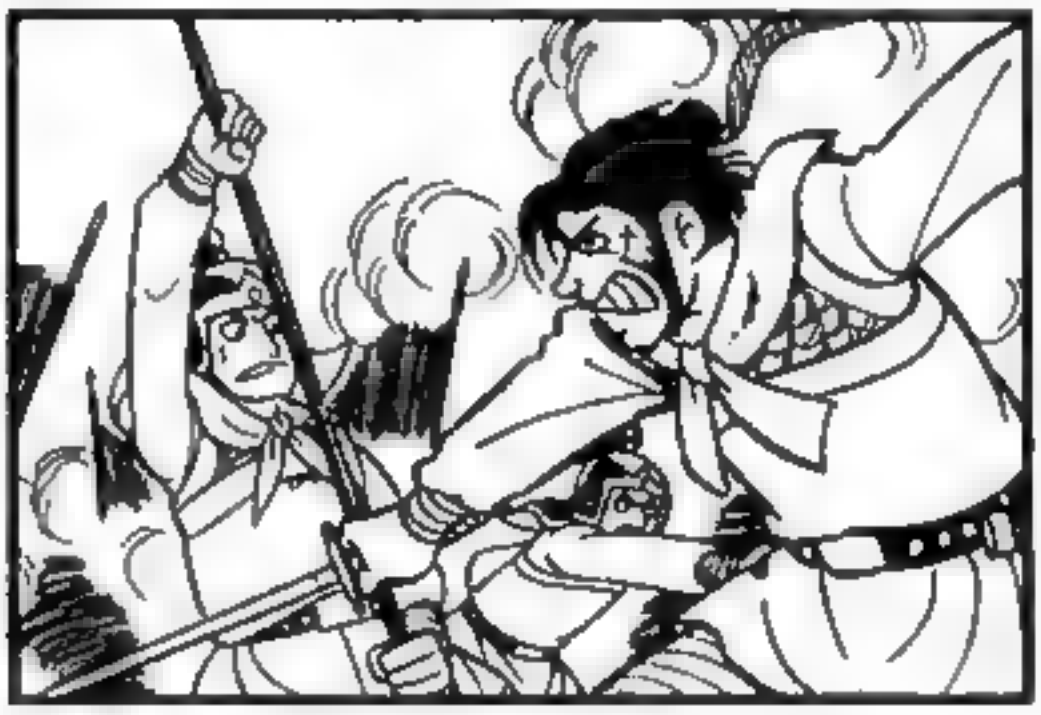
*THE YELLOW SCARF REBELS SLOGAN IN ORIGINAL CHINESE CHARACTERS

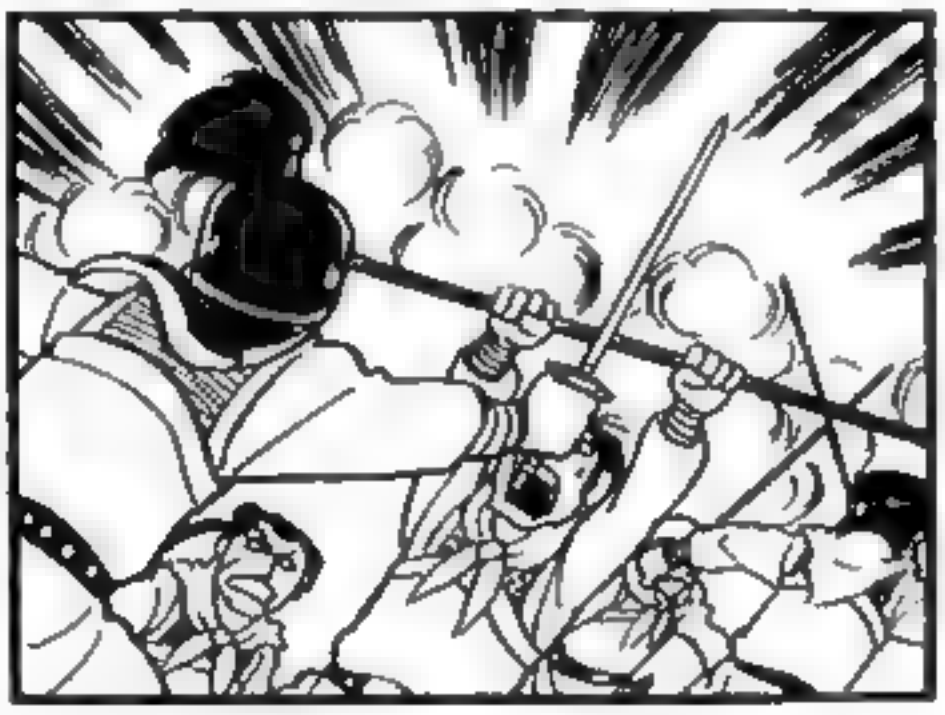
NOW ATTACK!

DON'T FORGET THAT OUR PLAN IS TO RETREAT AFTER SOME TIME.

ALRIGHT, HERE THEY COME.







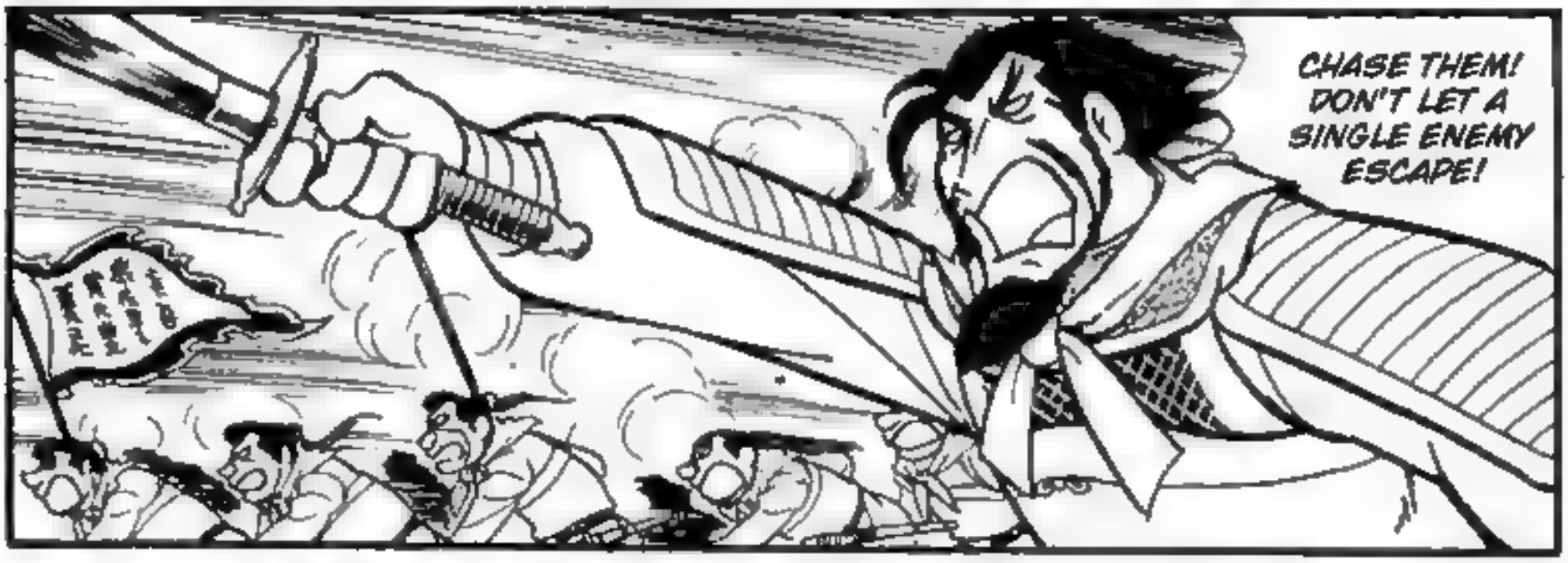
YES.

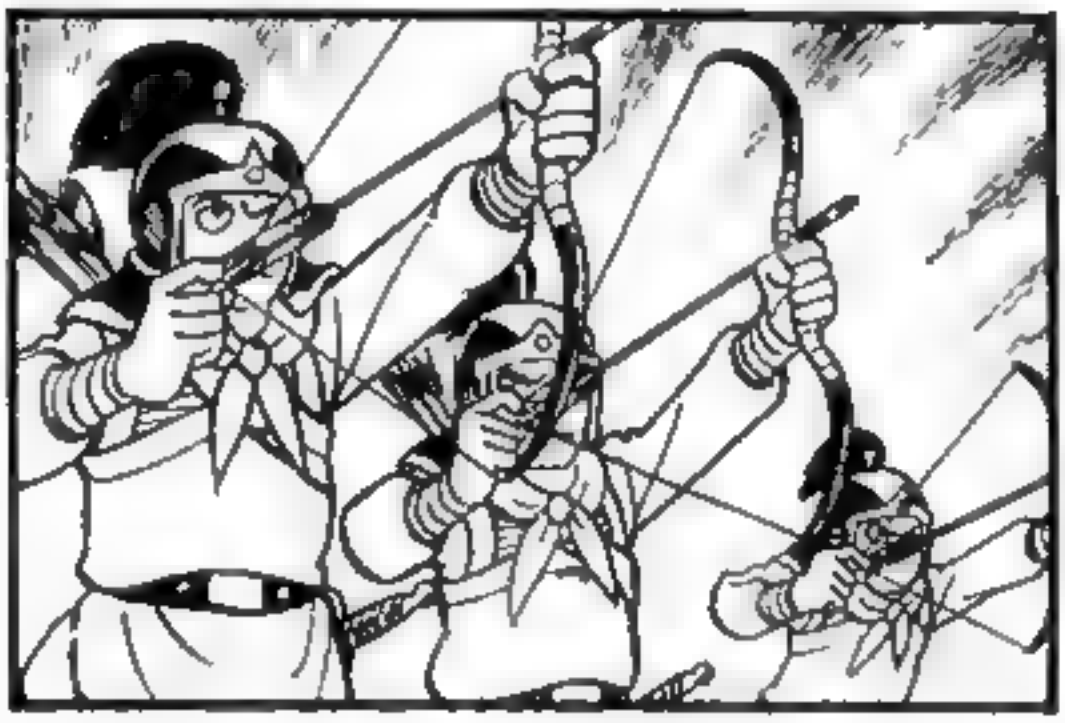
IT'S ABOUT TIME CAPTAIN.

RETREAT!

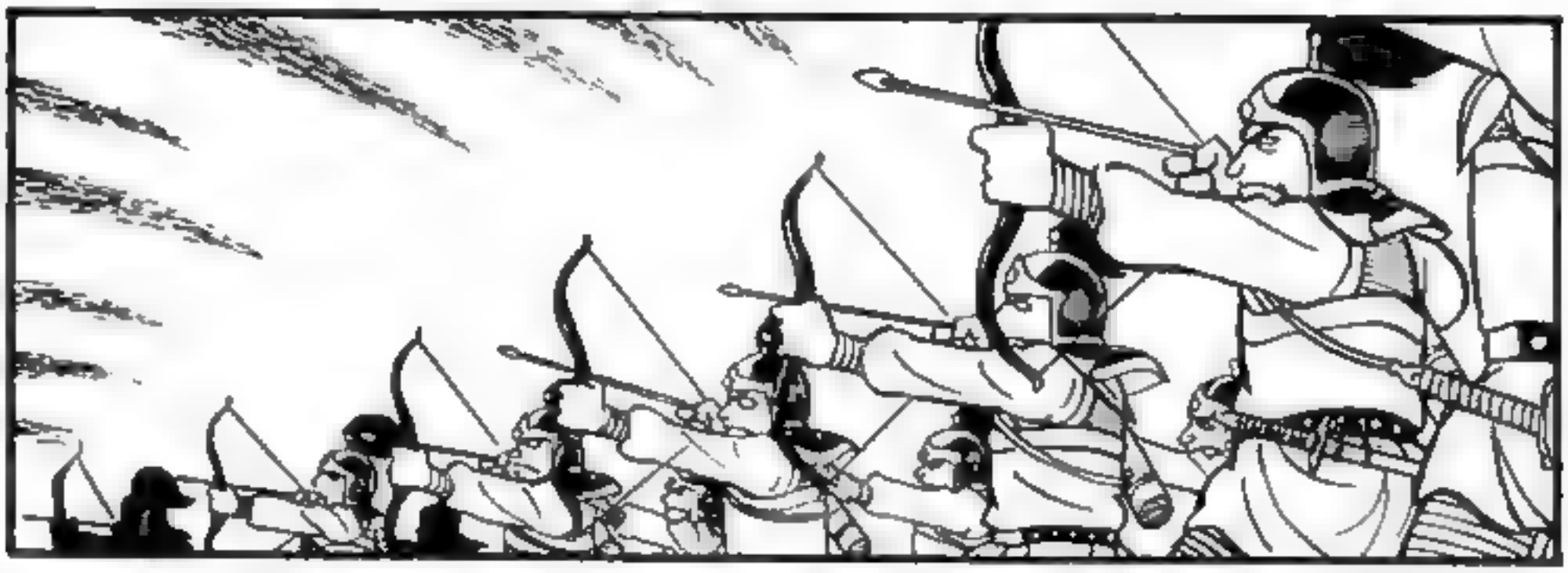
RETR-EAT!

LOOK AT THOSE COWARDS RUNNING AWAY AGAIN!

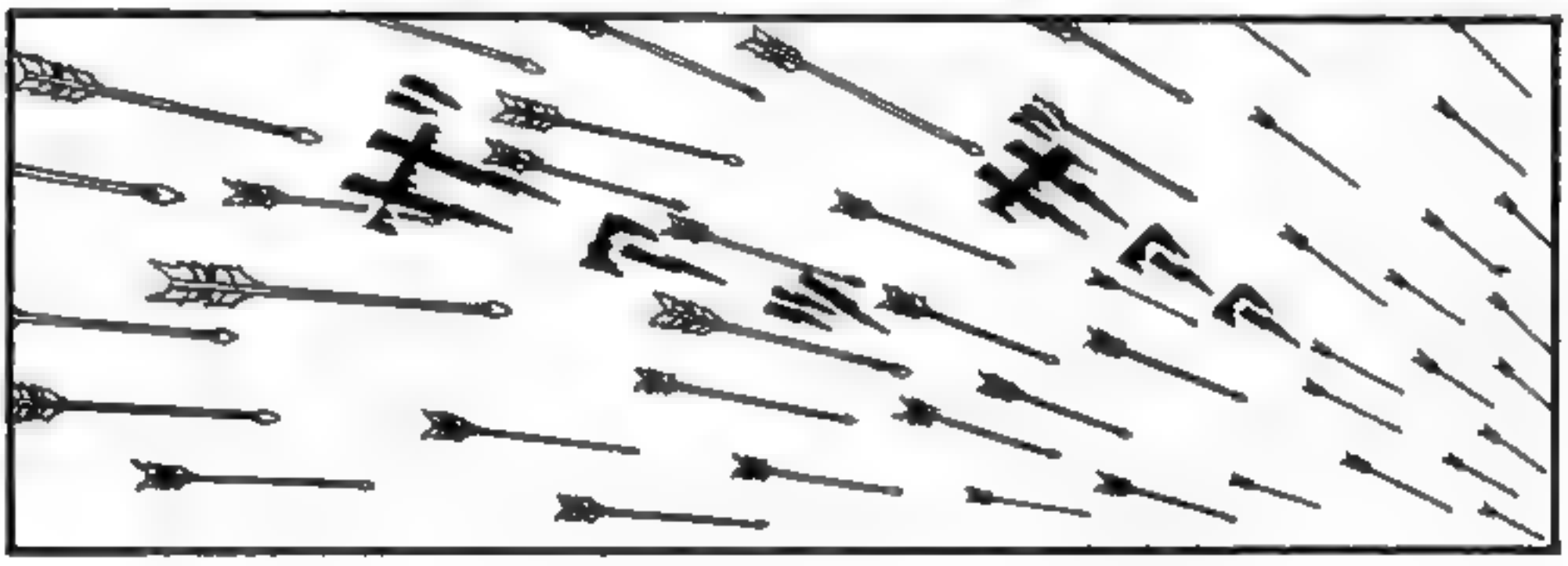

CHASE THEM! DON'T LET A SINGLE ENEMY ESCAPE!



READY THE ARCHERS.



FIRE!



GWAA!

AGHH!

WHAT!?

SIR, OVER THERE!!

DAMN, IT WAS A TRAP! RETREAT!

CHARGE!

HAHAHA! THEY FELL FOR THE TRAP PERFECTLY!

AGH!

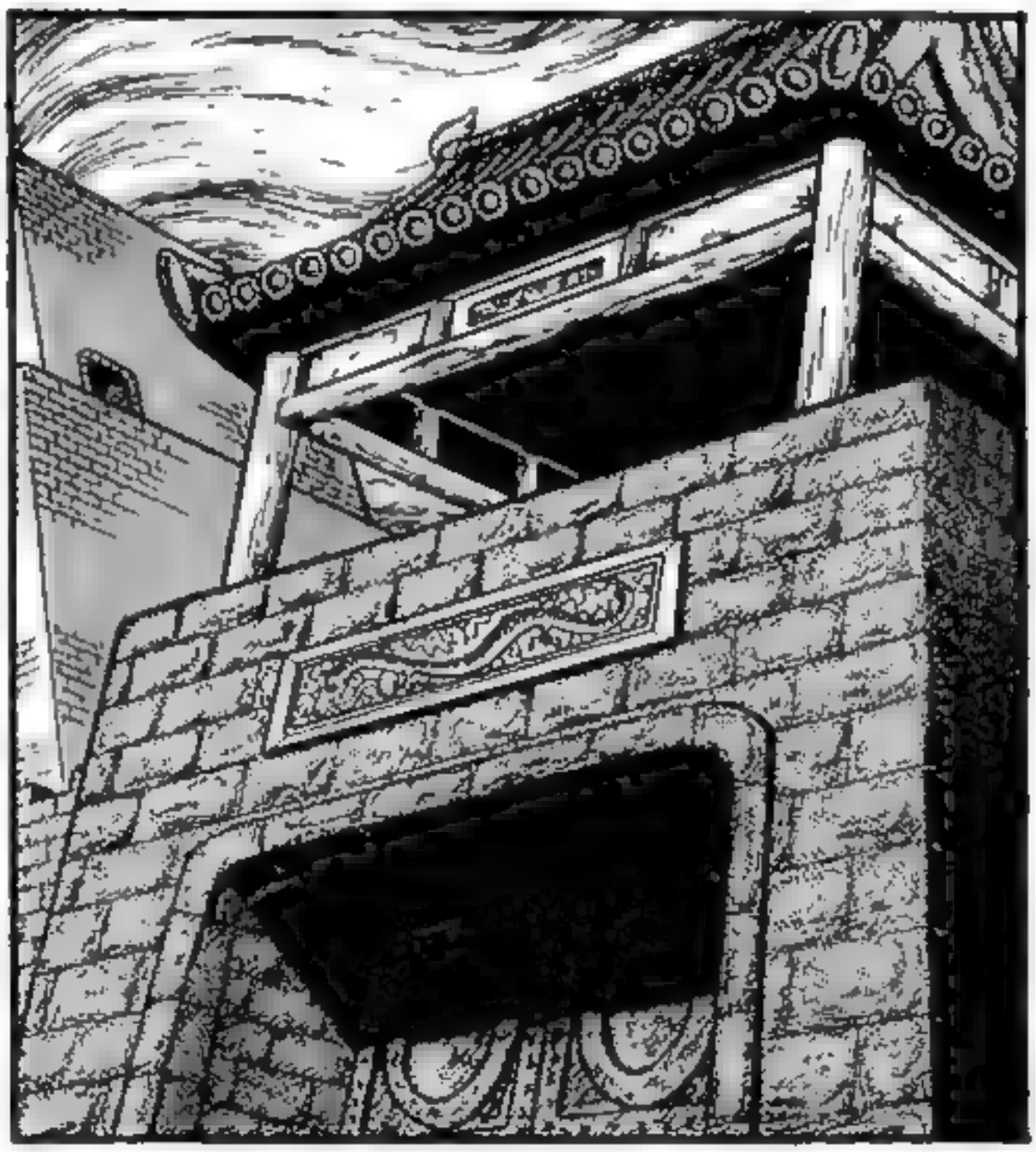
ACK!

OHH!

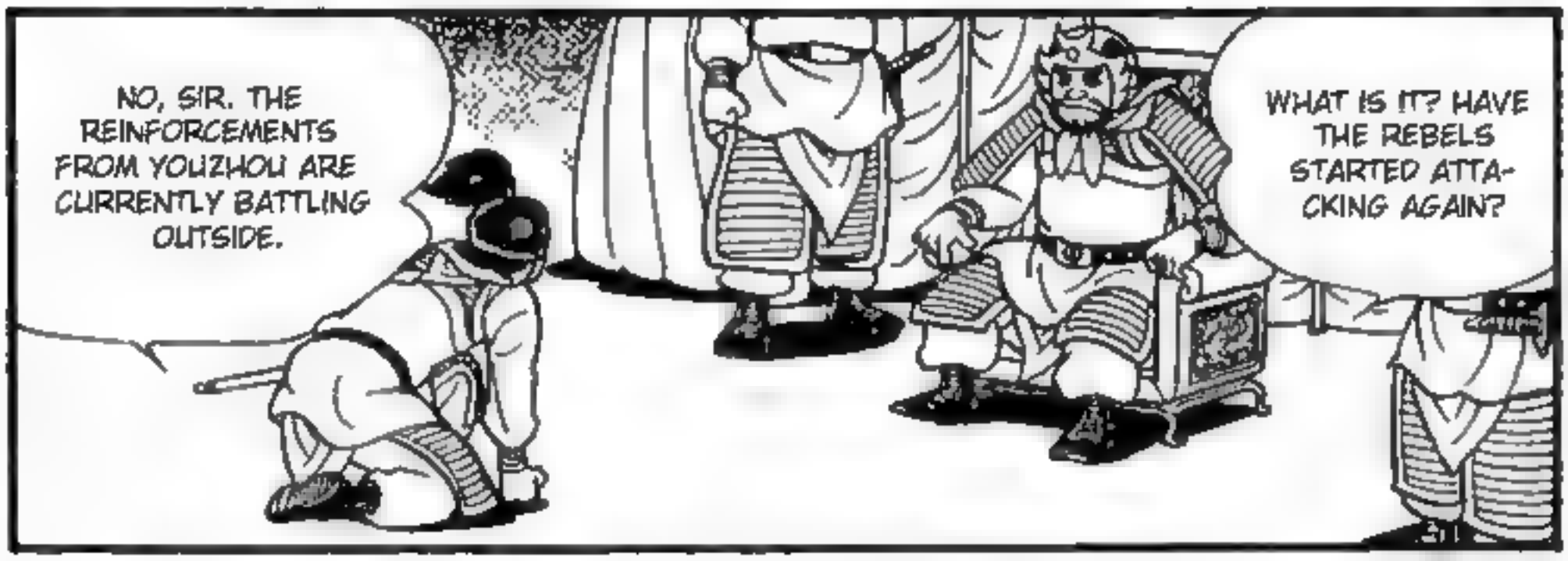
IT LOOKS TO BE SUCCESS-FULL SO FAR, CAPTAIN!

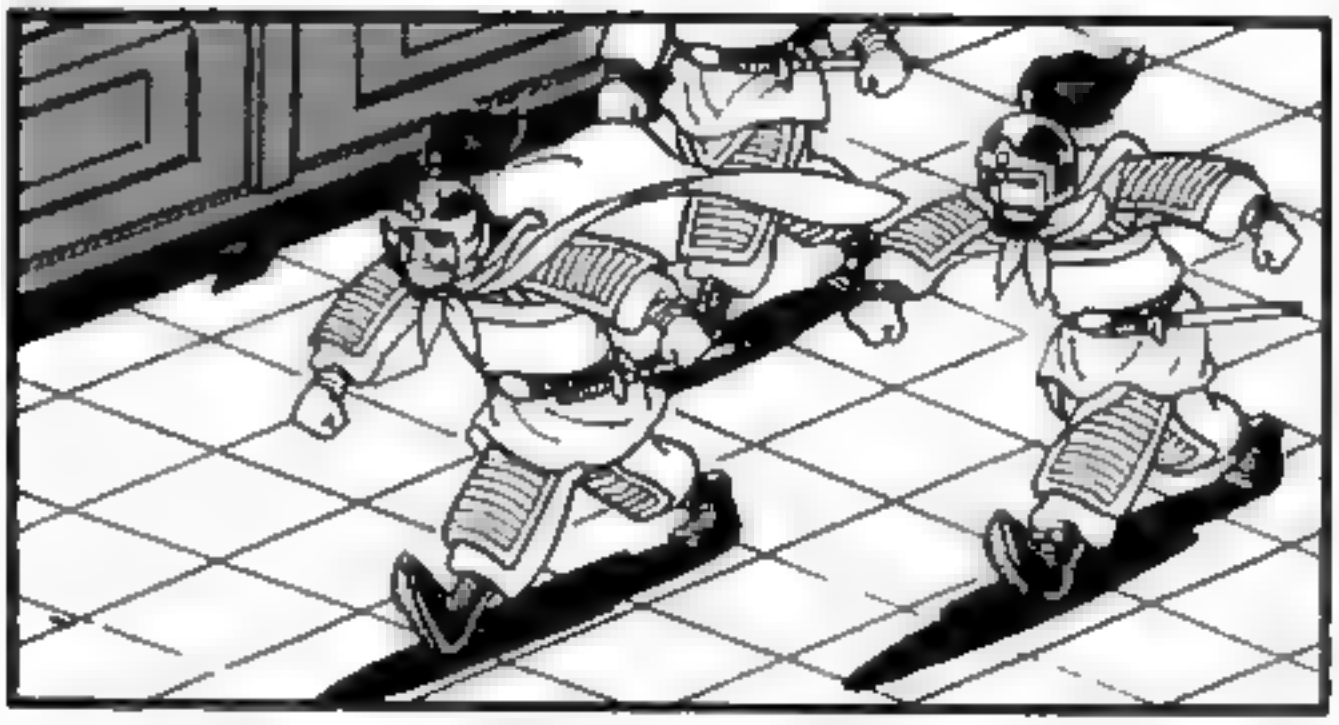
ALRIGHT, NOW LET'S TURN BACK AND FIGHT FOR REAL!

天已死
天当立
岁在甲子



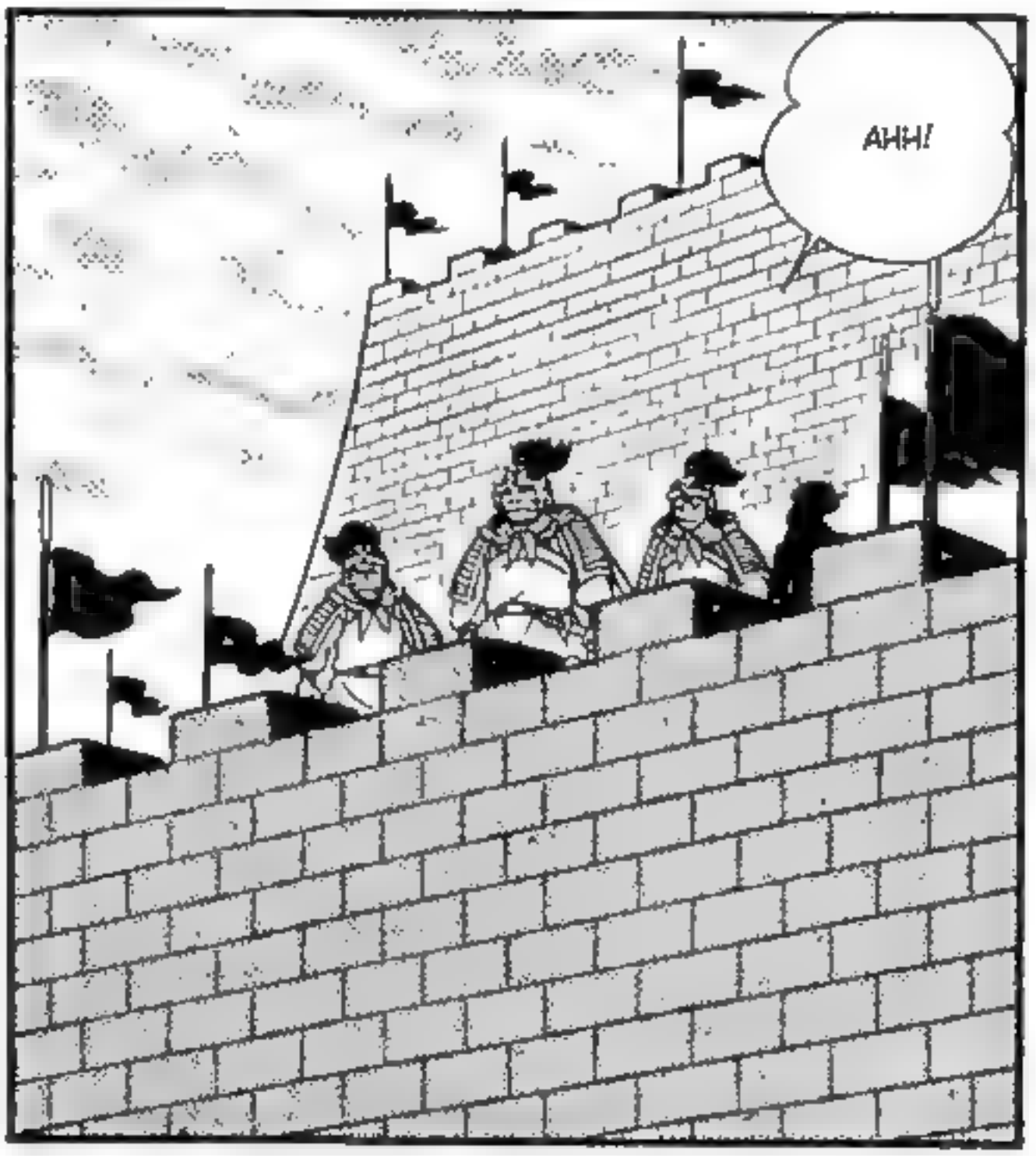
GOVER-
NOR!


NO, SIR. THE REINFORCEMENTS FROM YOUZHOU ARE CURRENTLY BATTLING OUTSIDE.
WHAT IS IT? HAVE THE REBELS STARTED ATTA-CKING AGAIN?

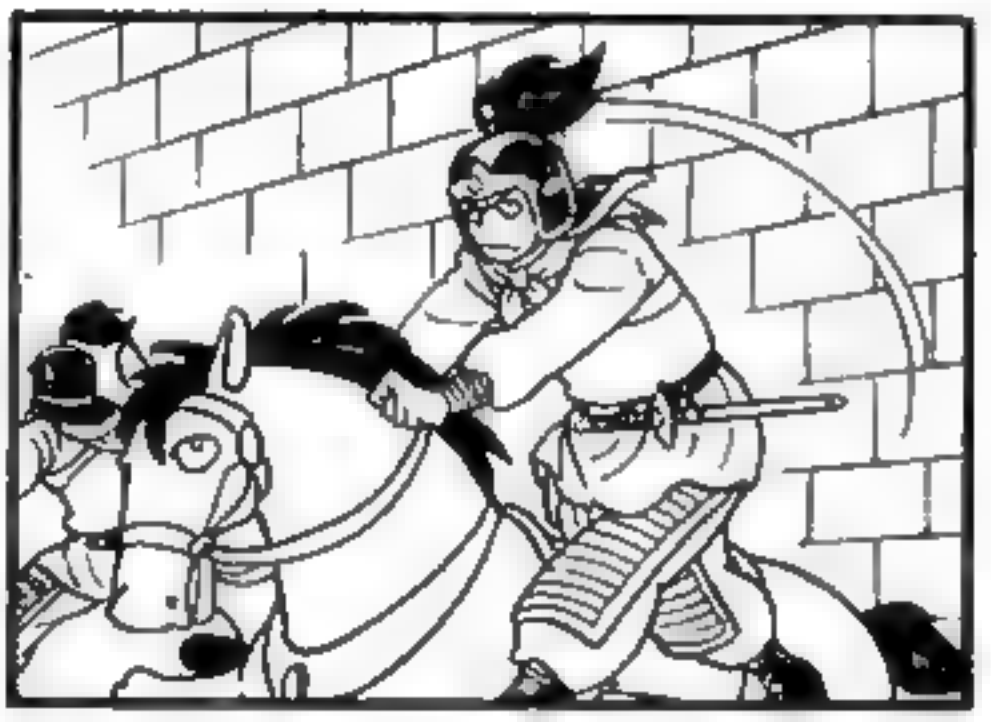


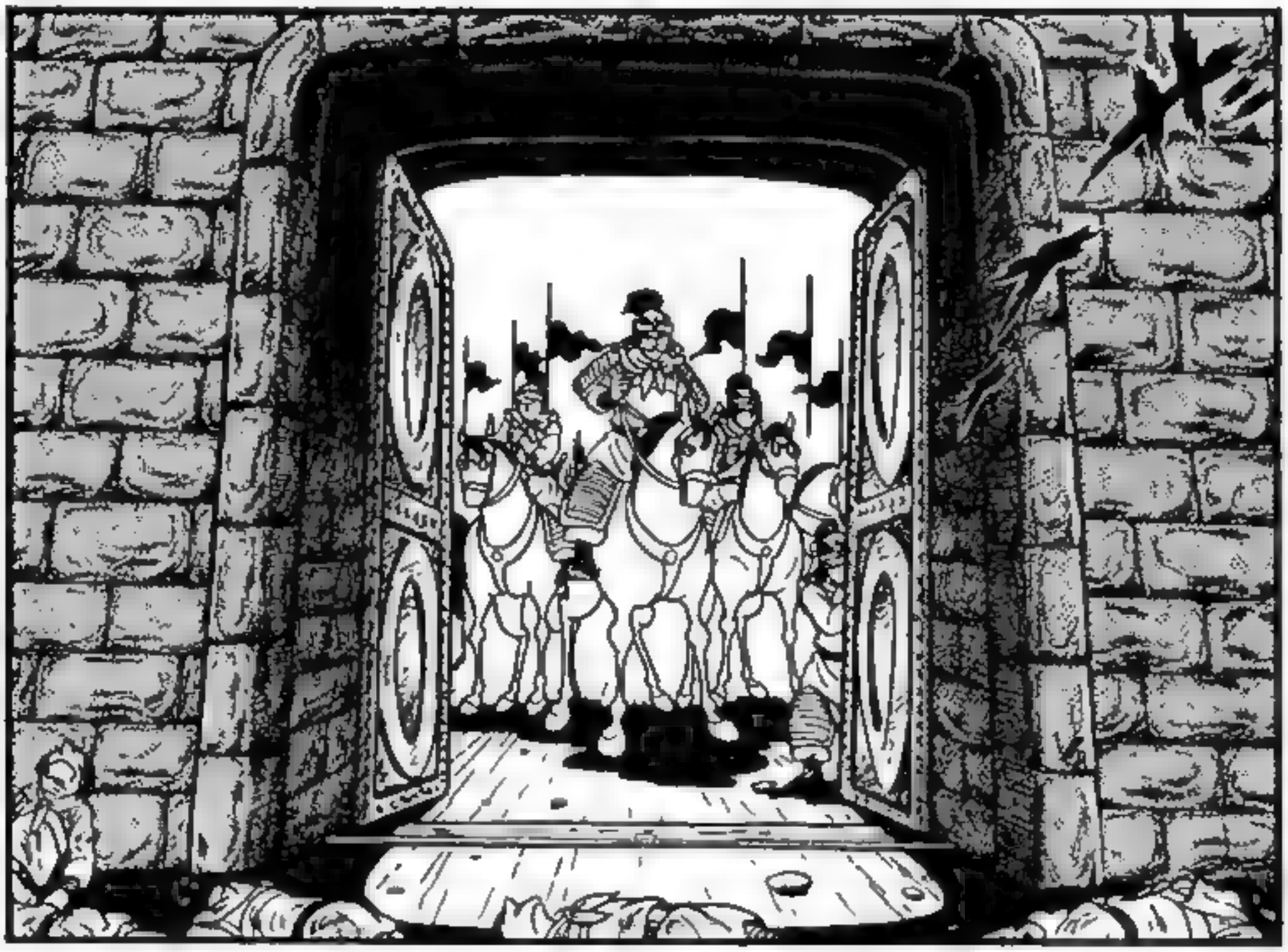
WHAT? THE REINFORCE-MENTS ARE HERE!?

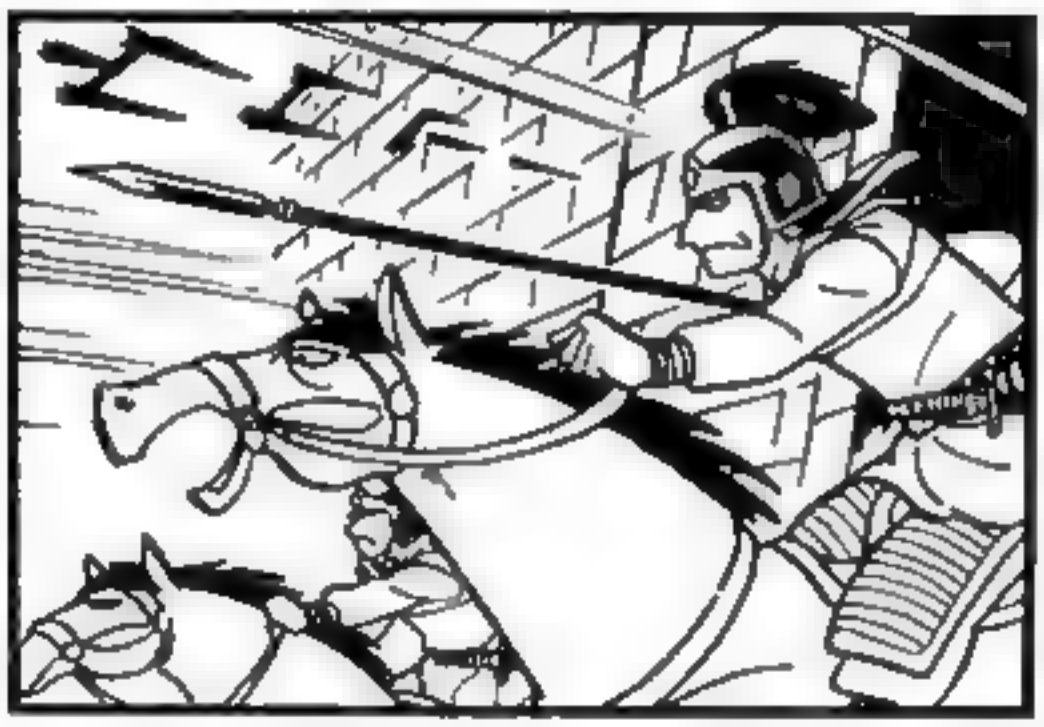
NOW IS THE TIME TO ATTACK SIR!


AHH!

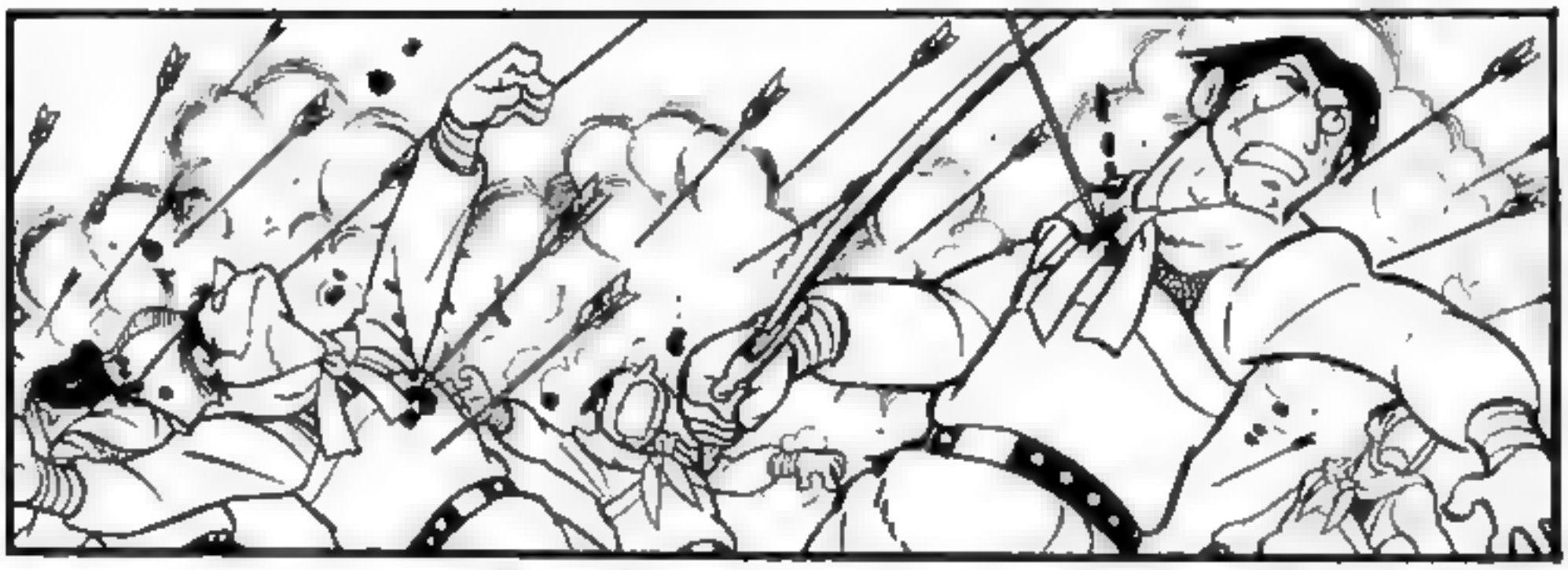
OPEN THE CASTLE GATES AND ATTACK!

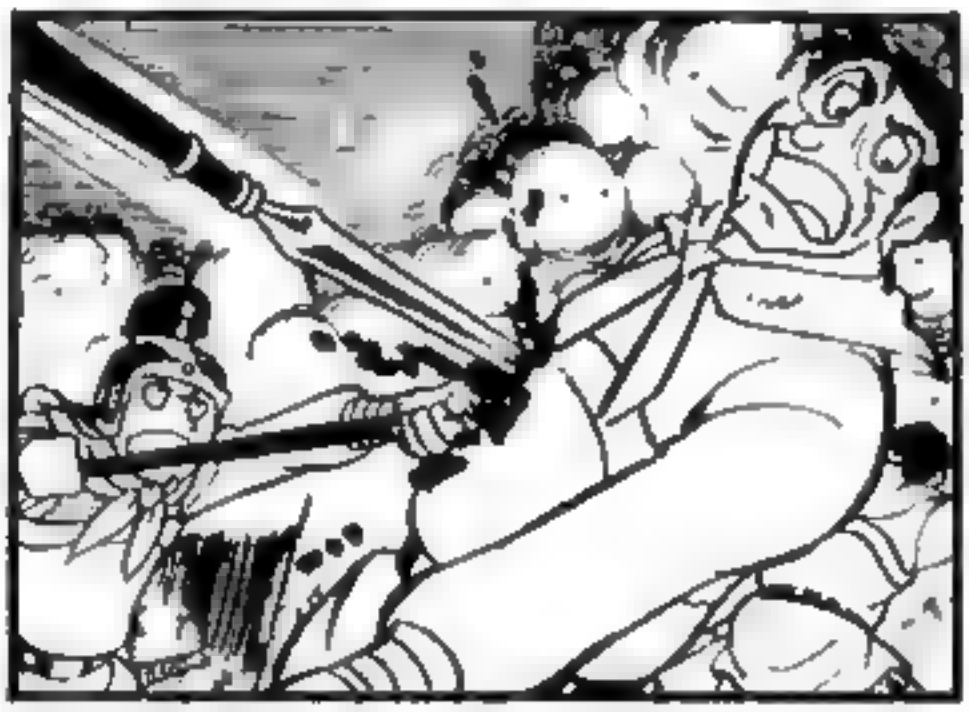




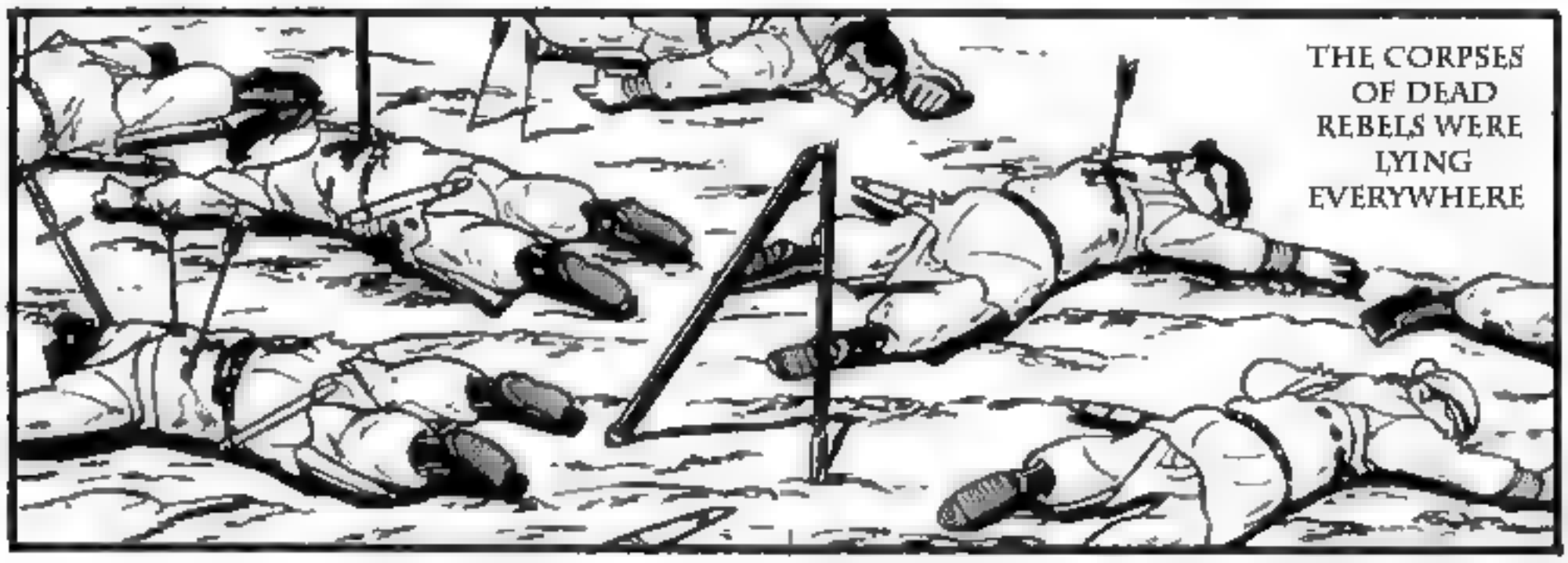


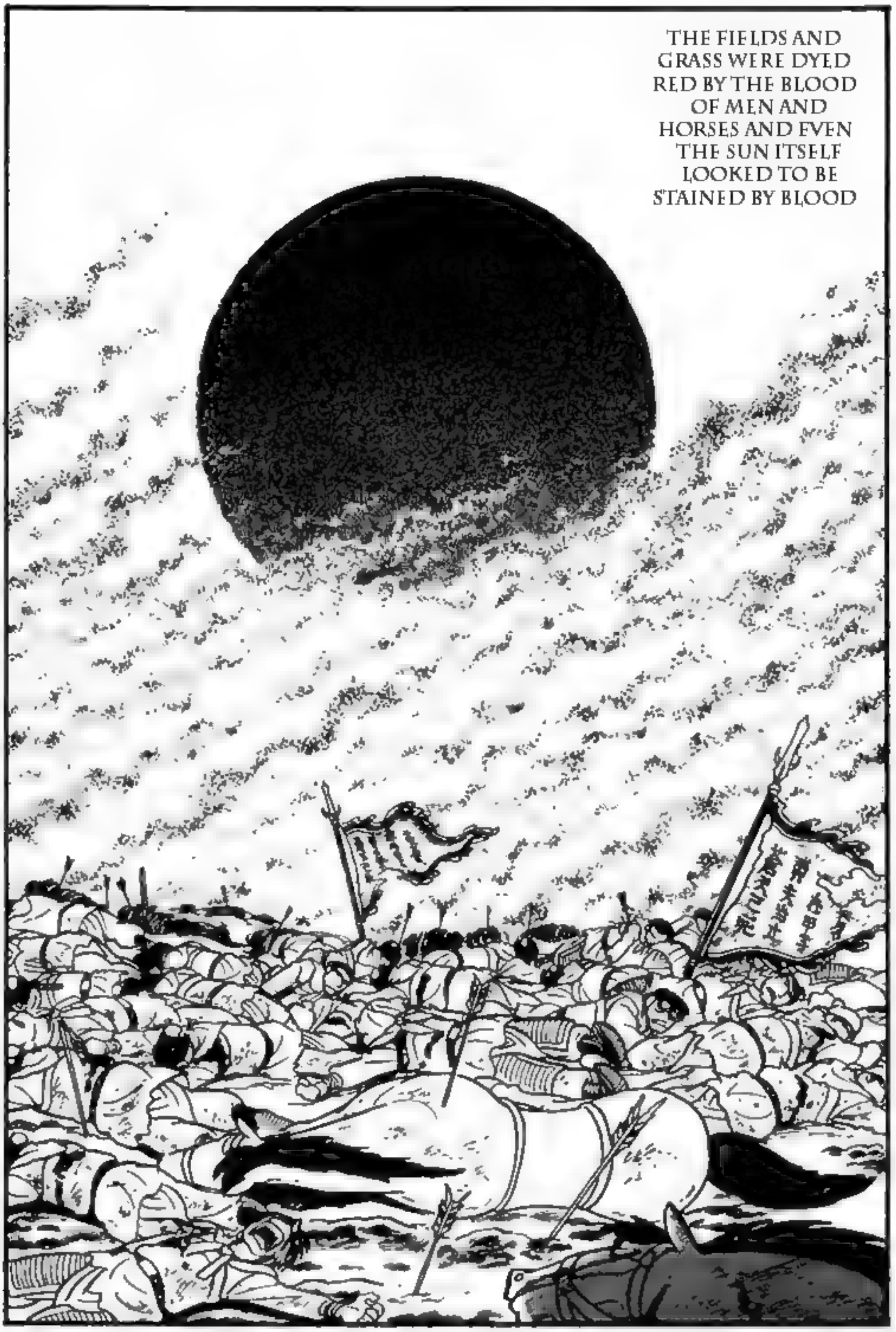
CHARGE!





BEING ATTACKED FROM ALL 4 SIDES, THE YELLOW SCARVES WERE ANNHILATED


THE CORPSES OF DEAD REBELS WERE LYING EVERYWHERE


THE FIELDS AND
GRASS WERE DYED
RED BY THE BLOOD
OF MEN AND
HORSES AND EVEN
THE SUN ITSELF
LOOKED TO BE
STAINED BY BLOOD

NOW, LET US CELEBRATE OUR VICTORY!

I AM SORRY BUT WE CAN'T AFFORD TO DO SO RIGHT NOW.

I AM DEEPLY GRATEFUL. JUST A DAY LATER AND WE MIGHT HAVE FALLEN TO THE REBELS.

I SEE. IT'S A SHAME YOU COULDN'T STAY HERE LONGER.

THE YELLOW SCARVES HAVE NOT BEEN ERADICATED YET AND SO WE MUST LEAVE FOR OTHER BATTLEFIELDS.

I WOULD LIKE TO HEAD TO GUANGZONG NOW.

HMM?

AH, CAPTAIN ZOU JING.

LONG AGO, THERE WAS A MAN CALLED LU ZHI WHO LIVED IN LIUSANG VILLAGE. HE WAS THE ONE WHO TAUGHT ME OF LITERATURE AND THE ART OF WAR WHEN I WAS A CHILD.

HE IS UP AGAINST ZHANG JIAO, THE LEADER OF THE YELLOW SCARVES SO I'M SURE HE MUST BE HAVING SOME TROUBLES. AND SO I MUST GO TO HELP HIM.

I HAVE HEARD THAT HE RECEIVED AN OFFICIAL ORDER AS THE PALACE GUARD COMMANDER TO LEAD AN ARMY OF 50,000 MEN TO VANQUISH THE REBELS AT GUANGZONG.

IT WAS AN HONOUR FIGHTING WITH YOU. MAY WE FIGHT TOGETHER ON THE BATTLEFIELD ONE DAY.

I SEE.

YES, SIR.

I SHALL REPORT BACK TO THE GOVERNOR OF YOUZHOU THAT YOU HAVE GONE TO HELP YOUR OLD TEACHER.

AND SINCE YOU ARE A VOLUNTEER ARMY, I HAVE NO RIGHT TO SAY ANYTHING ABOUT YOUR DECISIONS.

'TIS A PITY.

THEN PLEASE EXCUSE US.

ALRIGHT MEN, WE ARE NOW OFF TO GUANGZONG!

I AM OF THE SAME OPINION.

WHAT MAGNIFICENT AND BRAVE MEN. I WISH I HAD THEM WORKING UNDER ME.

MEANWHILE, LU ZHI WITH HIS 50,000 MEN WERE HAVING AN EXTREMELY TOUGH TIME BATTLING AGAINST ZHANG JIAO'S FORCE OF 150,000 MEN

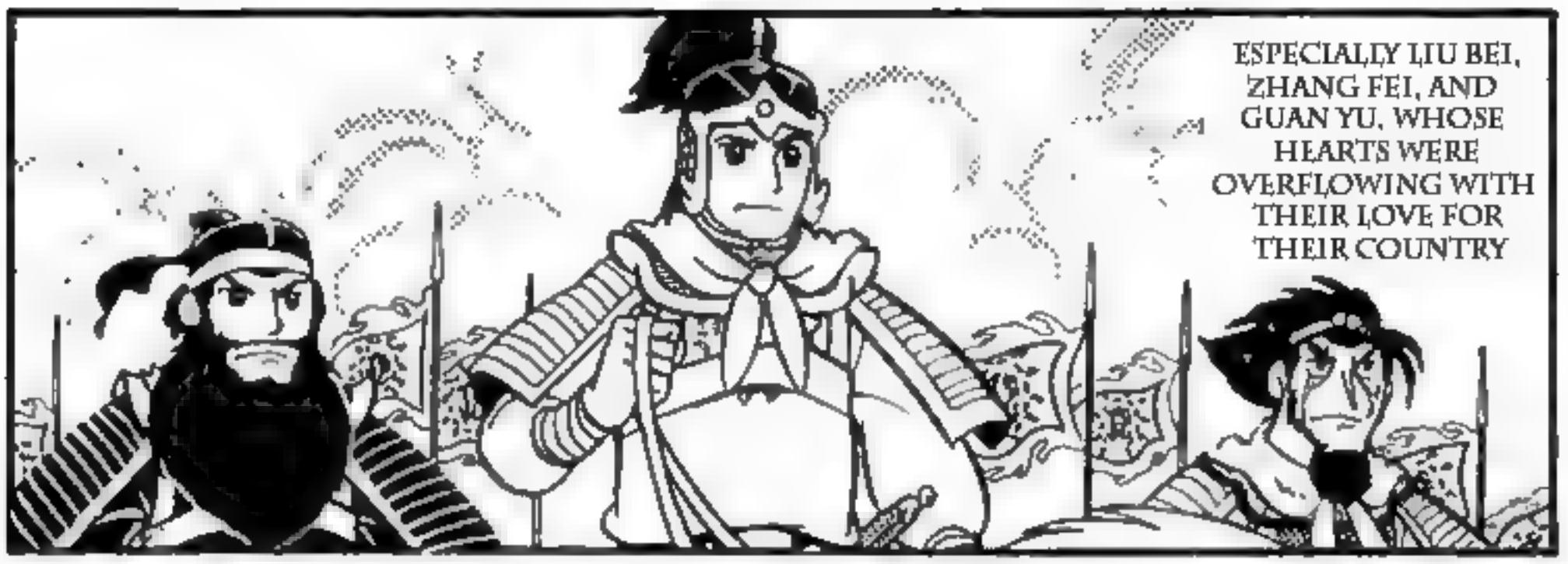
THE HAN'S SOLDIERS MAY HAVE HAD EXPENSIVE ARMOUR AND WEAPONS, BUT MANY OF THEIR SOLDIERS WERE WEAK WILLED MEN THINKING NOTHING BUT OF THEIR LIFE BACK AT HOME

DAY BY DAY, THE CASUALTIES KEPT ON INCREASING

OUTNUMBERED 3:1 AND WITH LOW MORALE, THE HAN FORCES WERE QUICKLY ON THE LOSING SIDE.

THEY WERE ALL BRAVE LOYAL MEN WHO WERE READY TO GIVE THEIR LIVES FOR A BRIGHTER PEACEFUL FUTURE.

BUT THE MEN OF THE VOLUNTEER ARMY NOW HEADING TO GUANGZONG WERE DIFFERENT


ESPECIALLY LIU BEI, ZHANG FEI, AND GUAN YU, WHOSE HEARTS WERE OVERFLOWING WITH THEIR LOVE FOR THEIR COUNTRY

AND ADVANCE TO THAT BRIGHTER TOMORROW AWAITING AHEAD.
THEIR PATRIOTISM ALLOWED THEM TO BRAVE PAST THE DANGERS,

FIRE TACTICS

HEADQUARTERS OF THE HAN ARMED FORCES FOR THE SUBJU GATION OF THE YE LLOW SCARF REBELS
AND WE NEED TO INCREASE OUR TROOPS ON THIS POINT OR WE WILL LOSE IT. IF THIS POINT IS LOST, THEN OUR WHOLE ARMY MIGHT BE JEOPARDIZED.
LET US KEEP DEFENDING THIS POINT AS WE'RE DOING ALREADY.

GENERAL LU ZHI, THERE'S A MAN NAMED LIU BEI XUANDE WHO WISHES TO SPEAK WITH YOU.

HE'S A YOUNG MAN WHO'S THE LEADER OF 500 MEN...

TELL HIM I'M BUSY PLANNING THE BATTLE STRATEGY.

JUST WHERE DID YOU SAY THIS MAN IS FROM?

?

AND HE ALSO LEADS 2 COMMANDERS NAMED GUAN YU AND ZHANG FEI.

HE SAID YOU WERE HIS TEACHER BACK IN LIUSANG VILLAGE OF ZHUO COUNTY.

BUT I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER HEARD OF THIS LIU BEI FELLOW...

NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT, IT'S BEEN 10 YEARS SINCE I LEFT LIUSANG SO THAT BOY SHOULD BE A YOUNG MAN BY NOW.

COULD IT BE THAT BOY WHO MADE AND SOLD STRAW MATS?

SOMEONE I TAUGHT...?

YES SIR.

ALRIGHT, BRING HIM IN.

HE WISHES TO MEET YOU AS WELL. THIS WAY, PLEASE.

IT'S BEEN AWHILE, TEACHER.

OHH, SO IT WAS YOU, LIU BEI!!

I WAS JOYED TO HEAR THAT YOU FOUND SUCCESS AS A GENERAL IN LUOYANG.

HMM, I SEE YOU'VE TURNED INTO A SPLENDID YOUNG MAN.

I COULD NO LONGER BEAR TO STAND IDLE WHILE THIS WORLD IS IN CHAOS.

SO WHY DID YOU COME VISIT ME NOW?

I WOULD LIKE NOTHING MORE THAN TO BE OF HELP TO YOU, IF ONLY A LITTLE BIT.

AND SO I CREATED A VOLUNTEER ARMY TO FIGHT THE REBELS. WE'VE GAINED MORE RECRUITS ON THE WAY HERE AND WE NUMBER AROUND 500.

THANK YOU LIU BEI.

IT MAKES ME HAPPY TO KNOW THAT I TAUGHT SUCH AN OUTSTANDING STUDENT.

TO REMAIN SO LOYAL AND PATRIOTIC IN SUCH HARD TIMES...

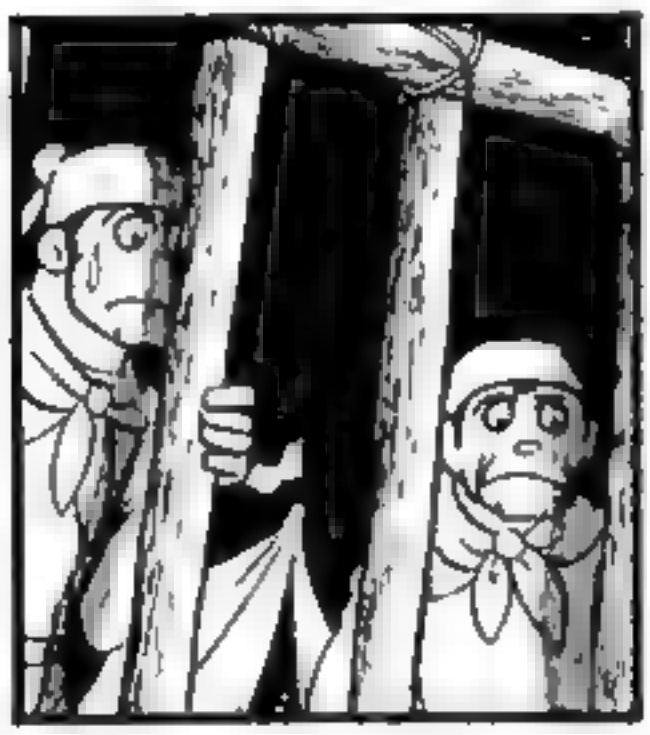
YES SIR.

IN ANY CASE, ANYONE WHO WISHES TO SHOW THEIR LOVE FOR OUR COUNTRY IS THE SAME AS THE OFFICIAL HAN ARMY. PLEASE FIGHT TOGETHER WITH US.

AND SO LIU BEI'S VOLUNTEER ARMY CAME TO FIGHT WITH THE STRONGEST FORCE OF THE YELLOW SCARVES

THE REBEL FORCES WERE INDEED VERY FIERCE.

AND WITH THEIR ADVANTAGE IN NUMBERS BY ALMOST 3 TIMES, EVEN 2 MONTHS OF FIGHTING COULD NOT CHANGE THE SEEEMINGLY HOPELESS SITUATION

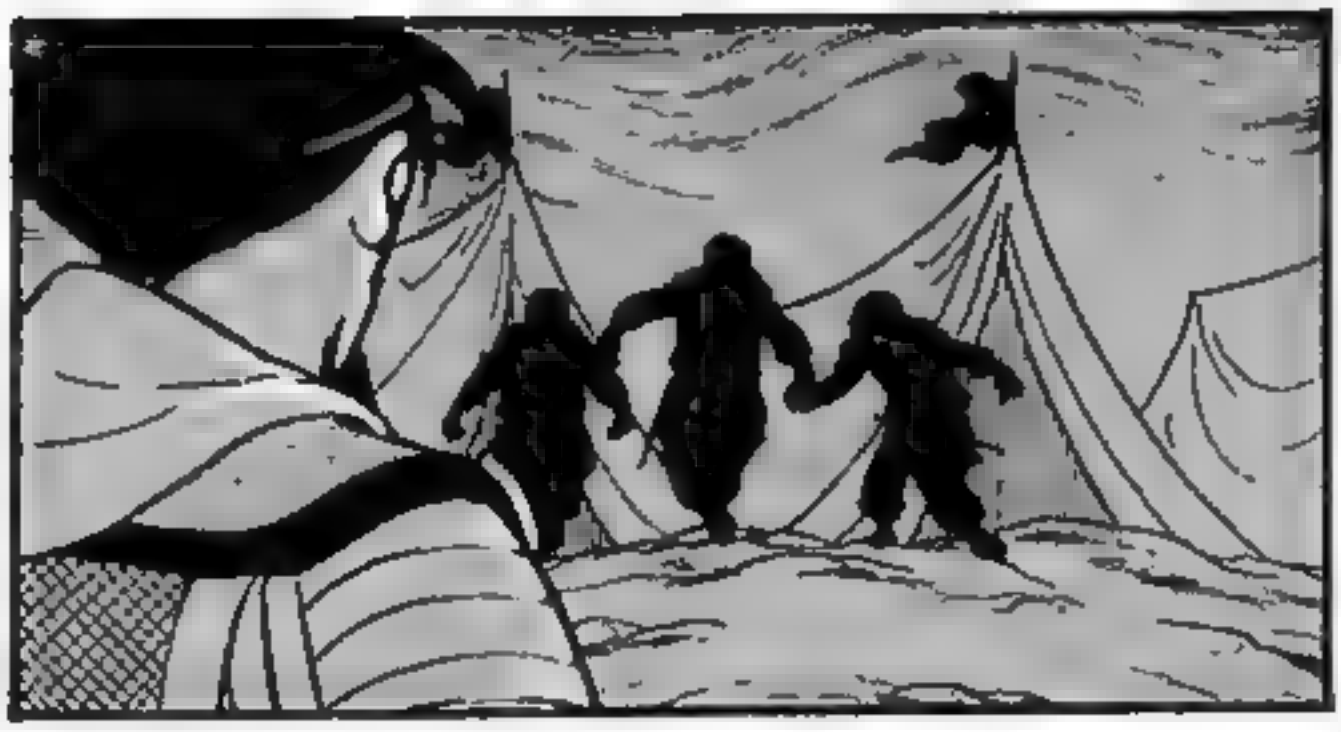


HEY, HEY,
HEY, HEY!

YOU THERE!
WHAT ARE YOU
DOING THERE IN
THIS TIME OF
THE NIGHT!?

SAVE YOUR
ENERGY FOR
TOMORROW'S
BATTLE. GO TO
SLEEP RIGHT
AWAY!

T-THEY SEEM TO
BE HAVING FUN
SO WE...



KEEP ON DANCING JUST LIKE THAT!
COME ON!
YEEHAW!

AH, ZHANG FEI. COME IN!
BROTHER LIU BEI, ARE YOU AWAKE?

HMPH! THOSE FOOLS SEEM TO BE ONLY GOOD FOR EATING AND DANCING!

I CAN'T STAND THIS ANYMORE.

YES.

HAHA.

YES,
AH GUAN YU, YOU'RE HERE AS WELL.

WHAT?

THAT'S RIGHT!

THAT FACE. I CAN TELL YOU'RE HERE TO COMPLAIN ABOUT SOMETHING.

BROTHER LIU BEI, WE'VE ALREADY BEEN HERE FOR 2 MONTHS. JUST HOW LONG ARE WE GOING TO KEEP ON FIGHTING ?

THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN! I WANT TO FIGHT A MORE MEANINGFUL FIGHT!

WHAT'S THE MATTER? DO YOU NOT LIKE FIGHTING ANYMORE, ZHANG FEI?

I WAS ACTUALLY CONCERNED OVER THE SAME MATTER AND SO I WAS DISCUSSING IT WITH GUAN YU.

BUT I'VE ALREADY SAID I WANTED TO BE OF SERVICE TO MY TEACHER AND I CANNOT JUST PULL OUT NOW...

IF THIS KEEPS UP, EVEN OUR OWN MEN WILL BECOME JUST LIKE THOSE WORTHLESS COWARDS!

LOOK AT THE HAN ARMY'S SOLDIERS OUT THERE! ALL THEY CARE ABOUT IS EATING AND DRINKING INSTEAD OF FIGHTING!

WELL, IF THAT'S WHAT BROTHER THINKS...

WE NEED TO AT LEAST ACHIEVE SOME SORT OF SUCCESS HERE BEFORE WE CAN PULL BACK.

BUT THOSE DAMN DOLTS THEY CALL SOLDIERS...JUST DRINKING, EATING, AND DANCING...!

OH, SO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO DRINK?

ZHANG FEI, MAYBE YOU SHOULD HAVE A DRINK TOO TO CALM DOWN.

HEH HEH, THEN DON'T MIND IF I DO.

YES, YES, I KNOW.

BUT I'M DIFFERENT FROM THOSE OTHER BASTARDS. I'M ONLY DRINKING BECAUSE I'M IN A FOUL MOOD.

AHHH, THAT HITS THE SPOT.

ZZZZZ...

?...

EXCUSE ME.

I ACTUALLY CAME OUT HERE TO REQUEST SOMETHING FROM YOU.

AH, GOOD EVENING, TEACHER.

AH, IT'S GOOD TO SEE ALL 3 OF YOU ARE HERE.

WHAT IS IT, SIR?

FOOLISHLY ATTEMPTING TO ATTACK ALL OUT FROM HERE IN ORDER TO END THIS BATTLE QUICKLY WILL ONLY BRING ABOUT MORE CASUALTIES ON OUR SIDE.

AS I'M SURE YOU GENTLEMEN HAVE REALIZED, THIS REGION IS QUITE MOUNTAINOUS AND EASY FOR THE REBELS TO DEFEND AND HOLD THEIR GROUND.

THAT'S WHERE YOU COME IN...

AND SO IT SEEMS WE MUST CHANGE OUR PLAN TO THAT FITTING A LONGER-TERM FIGHT...

OF COURSE, GENERALS ZHU JUN AND HUANGFU SONG ARE ALREADY FIGHTING THEM BUT THEY'VE YET TO ATTAIN ANY RESULTS.

RIGHT NOW, THE TWO BROTHERS WHO ARE ALSO THE REBELS' MOST POWERFUL GENERALS, ZHANG BAO AND ZHANG LIANG, ARE RUNNING AMOK IN YINGCHUAN.

I WOULD LIKE YOU TO GO THERE AND HELP OUT WITH THE FIGHT.

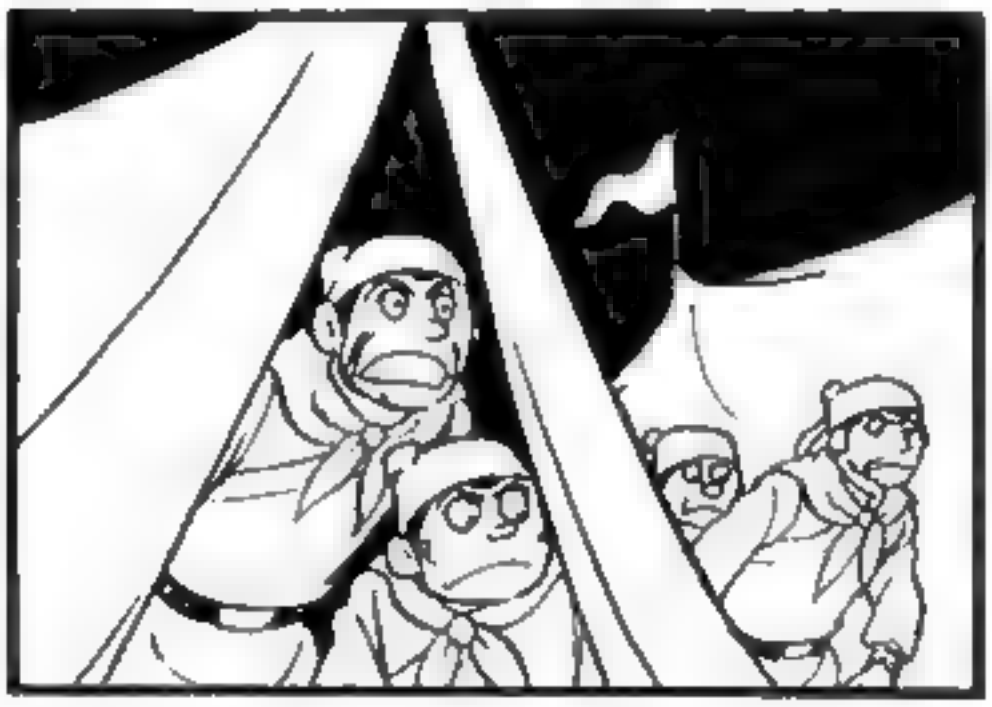
SO, WILL YOU DO IT?

IF THE REBEL FORCES IN YINGCH-UAN ARE CRUSHED, THE REBELS HERE WILL FEAR LOSING THEIR ONLY ROUTE FOR RETREAT AND MIGHT WITHDRAW AS WELL.

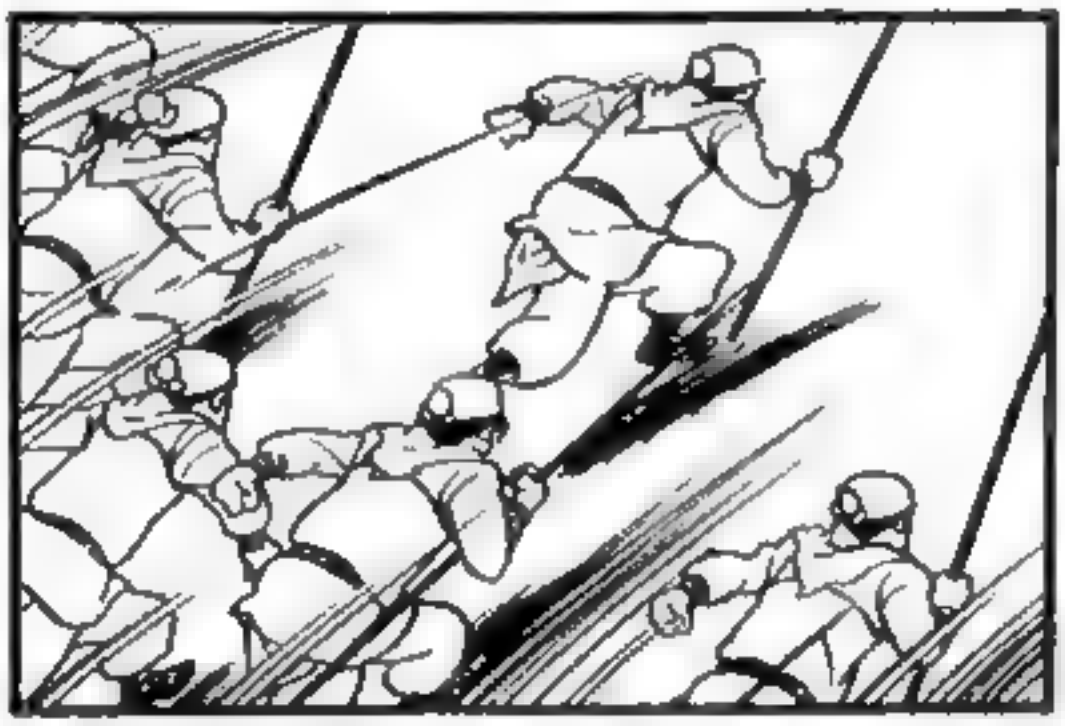
YES, OF COURSE SIR. WE SHALL DEPART RIGHT AWAY.

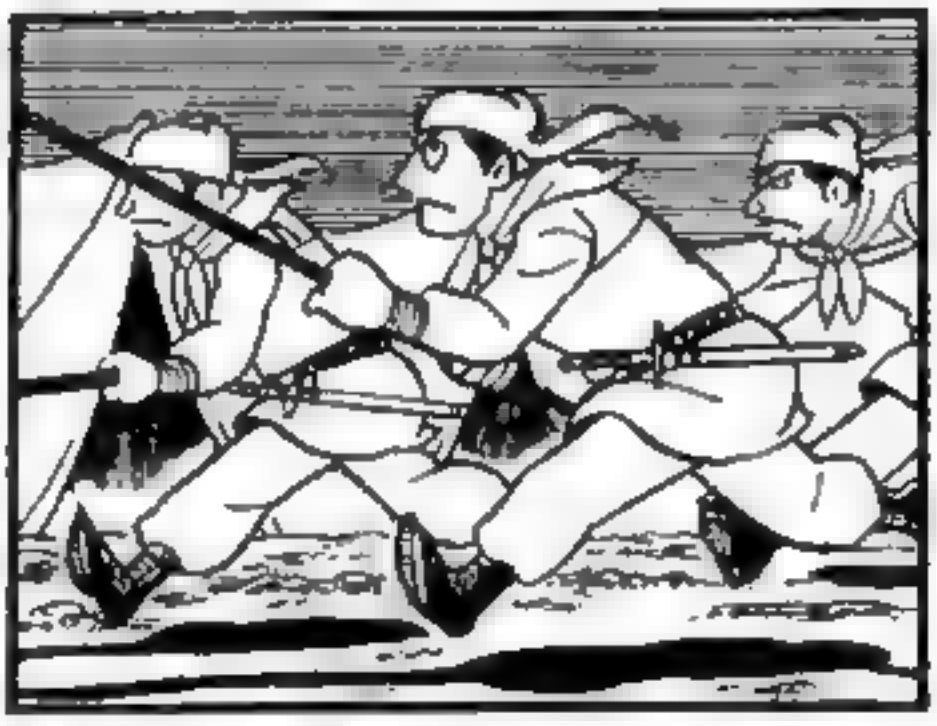
ALRIGHT, I'LL GO WAKE UP THE MEN.

ALRIGHT, MEN!! TIME TO WAKE UP!



WE'RE MOVING OUT TO YINGCHUAN SO GET PREPARED IMMEDIATELY!





MOVE OUT!

I BID YOU SUCCESS.

WELL THEN, WE SHALL BE OFF, TEACHER.

YINGCHUAN A REGION COVERED ONLY BY WIDE EXPANSIVE FIELDS.
LAKES AND SWAMPS

AND LOCATED HERE WAS GENERAL ZHU JUN AND HIS FORCES

YES SIR.

REINFORCEMENTS SENT BY GENERAL LU ZHI FROM GUANGZONG...?

HMM.

SO YOU'RE THE LEADER OF THESE TROOPS?

YES SIR.

BY REINFORCEMENTS DID YOU MEAN THIS VOLUNTEER ARMY?

HMPH, JUST WHAT IS LU ZHI THINKING SENDING ME THESE BEGGAR CORPS?

WELL, I DON'T KNOW HOW STRONG YOU MAY ALL BE BUT PLEASE FIGHT HARD FOR OUR BELOVED COUNTRY. IF YOU MANAGE TO ACHIEVE SOME NOTABLE SUCCESSES HERE, YOU MIGHT BE ABLE TO BECOME A MAYOR OF SOME VILLAGE AND PEACEFULLY LIVE OUT THE REST OF YOUR DAYS.

YES.

JUST GIVE THEM SOME RATIONS AND SEND THEM OUT TO THE FRONTLINES.

PLEASE FIGHT WELL FOR THIS COUNTRY.

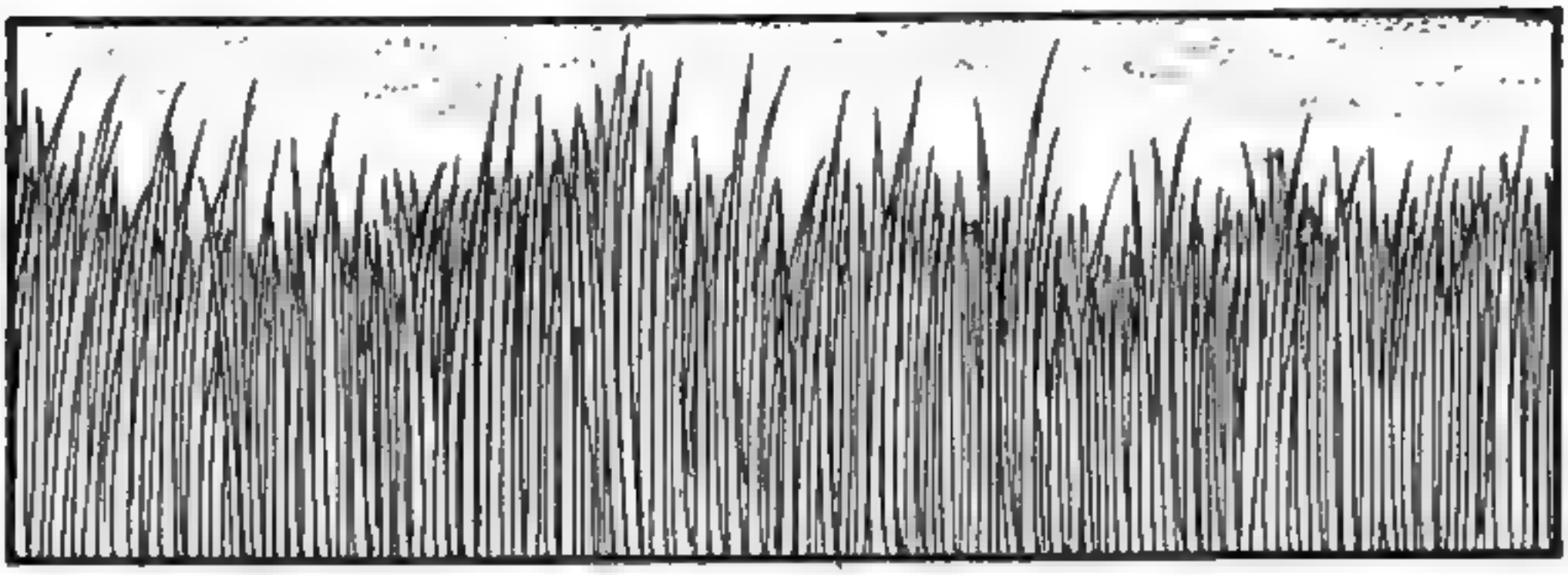
NNGH...

WE DID NOT COME HERE TO FIGHT WITH THE HAN ARMY.

ZHANG FEI!

BAST-ARD...!

LIU BEI WAS STATIONED IN THE FRONTLINES DIRECTLY OPPOSITE THE STRONGEST TROOPS OF THE REBELS



BROTHER LIU BEI, WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE?

THE REBELS HERE ARE HIGHLY TRAINED AND SO THE FRONTLINES HAVE BEEN SHIFTING BACK AND FORTH LIKE THE TIDES OF A WAVE. THERE IS LITTLE CHANCE OF A VICTORY FROM A STRAIGHT-UP BATTLE.

?
I THINK THESE GRASSES WILL BURN QUITE NICELY.

THEN, HOW EXACTLY SHOULD WE CARRY OUT THE RAID?

A RAID WILL PROBABLY BE THE BEST BET TO SUCCESS.

I SEE! I NEVER KNEW BROTHER KNEW SUCH CRAFTY TACTICS!

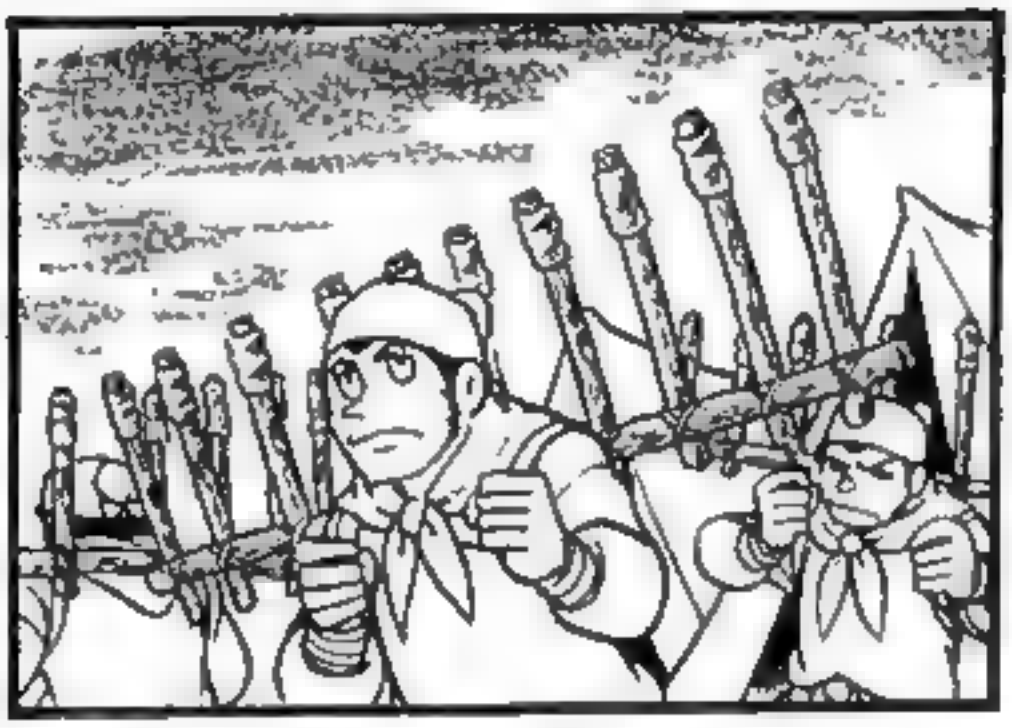
THE REBELS WOULD NEVER GUESS THAT THERE'S ONLY 500 MEN. THEY'D THINK THAT IT'S A FULL-OUT RAID BY THE HAN ARMY AND BE IN A STATE OF PANIC.

WE'LL HAVE EACH MAN CARRYING 10 TORCHES AND COME OUT HERE WHEN NIGHT FALLS.

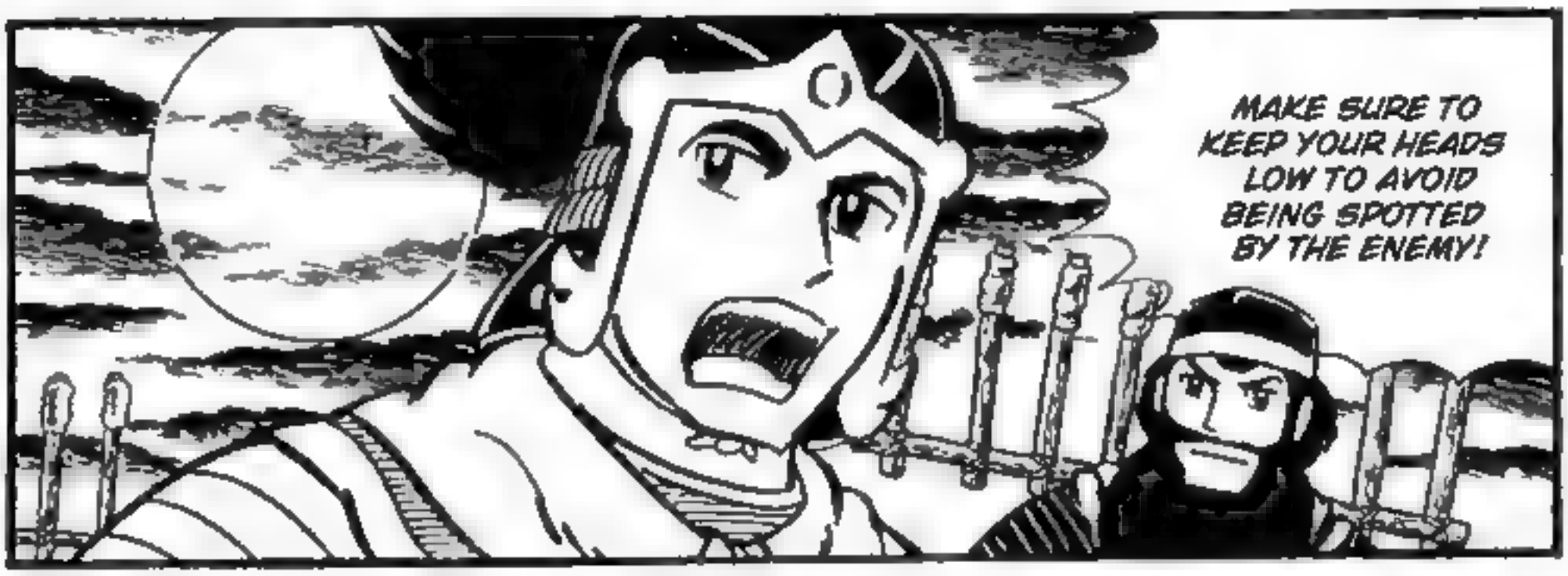
HEH HEH, LOOKS LIKE THINGS WILL GET INTERESTING.

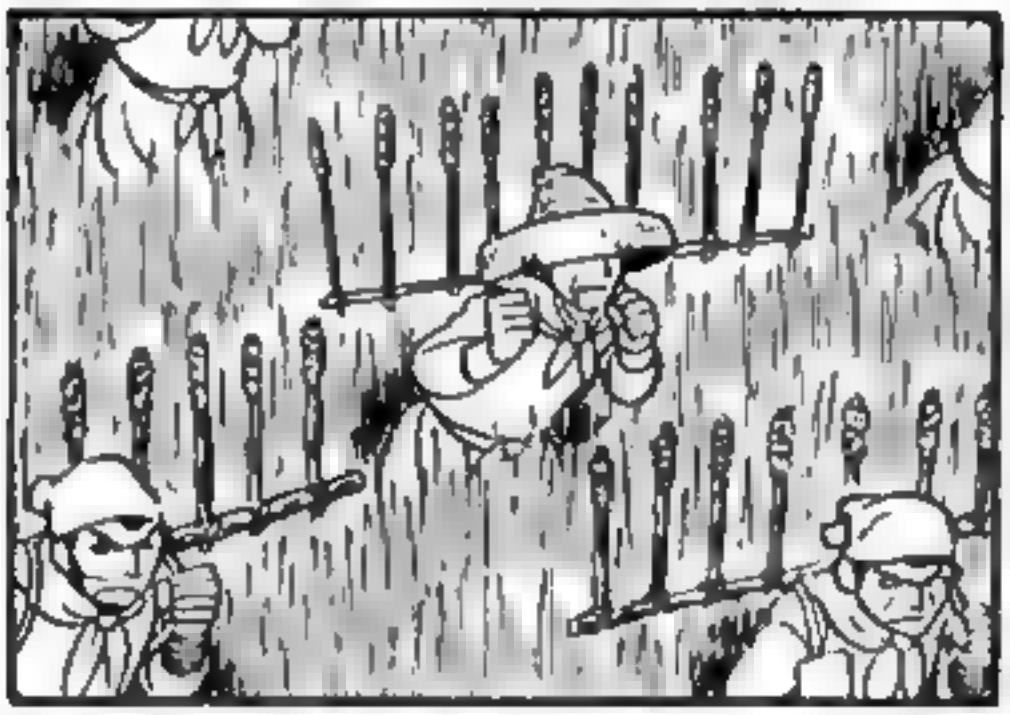
JUST WAIT AND SEE, YOU SOLDIERS OF THE OFFICIAL HAN ARMY. WE'LL SHOW YOU HOW THINGS ARE DONE.

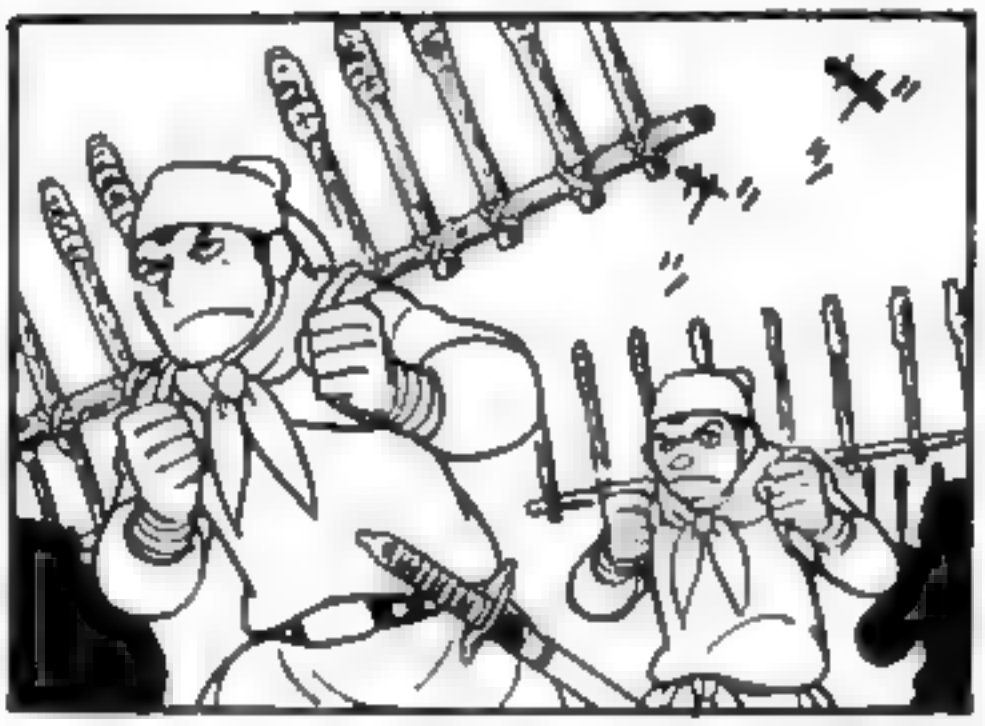
WAKE UP MEN, WAKE UP!

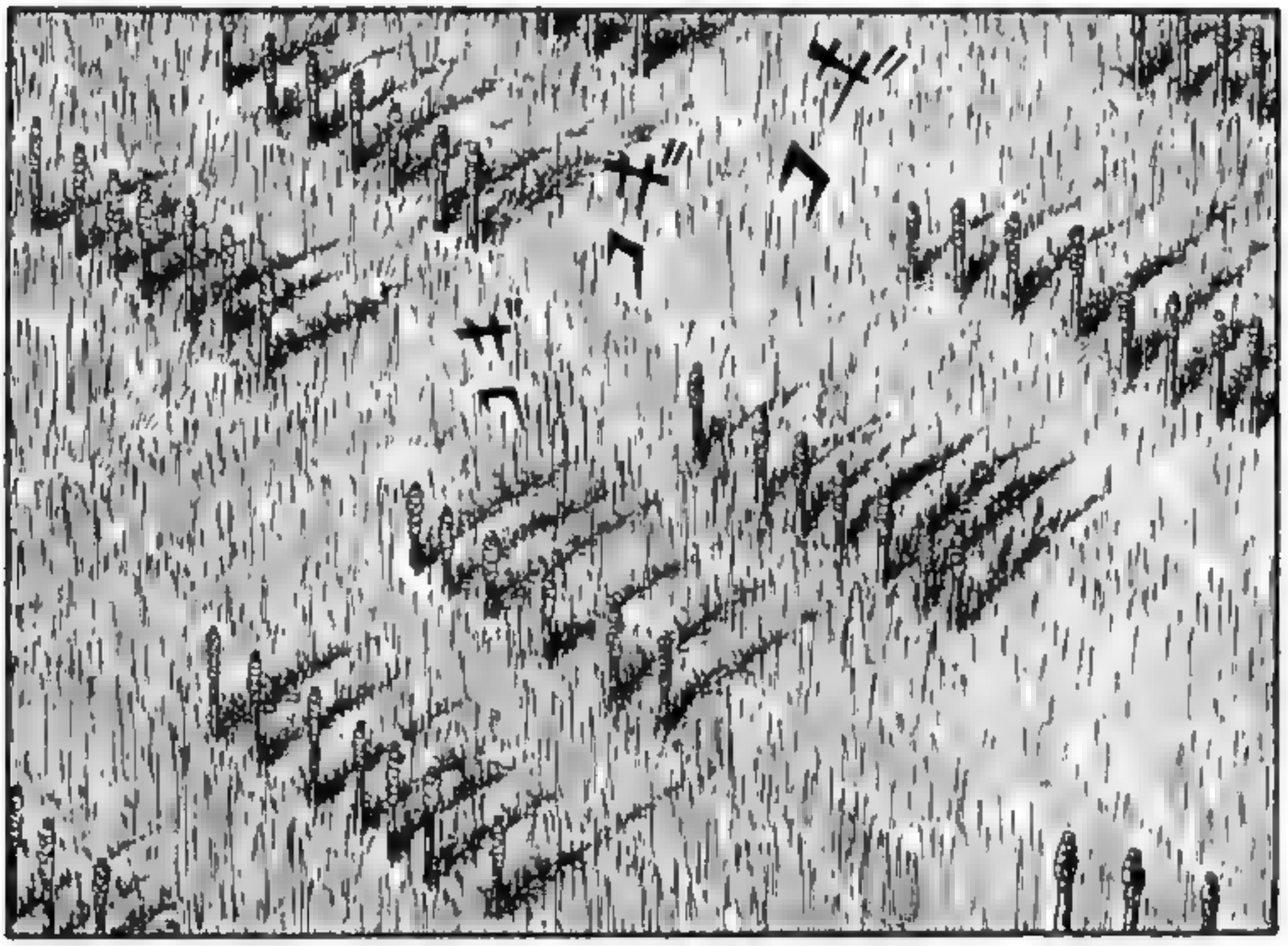


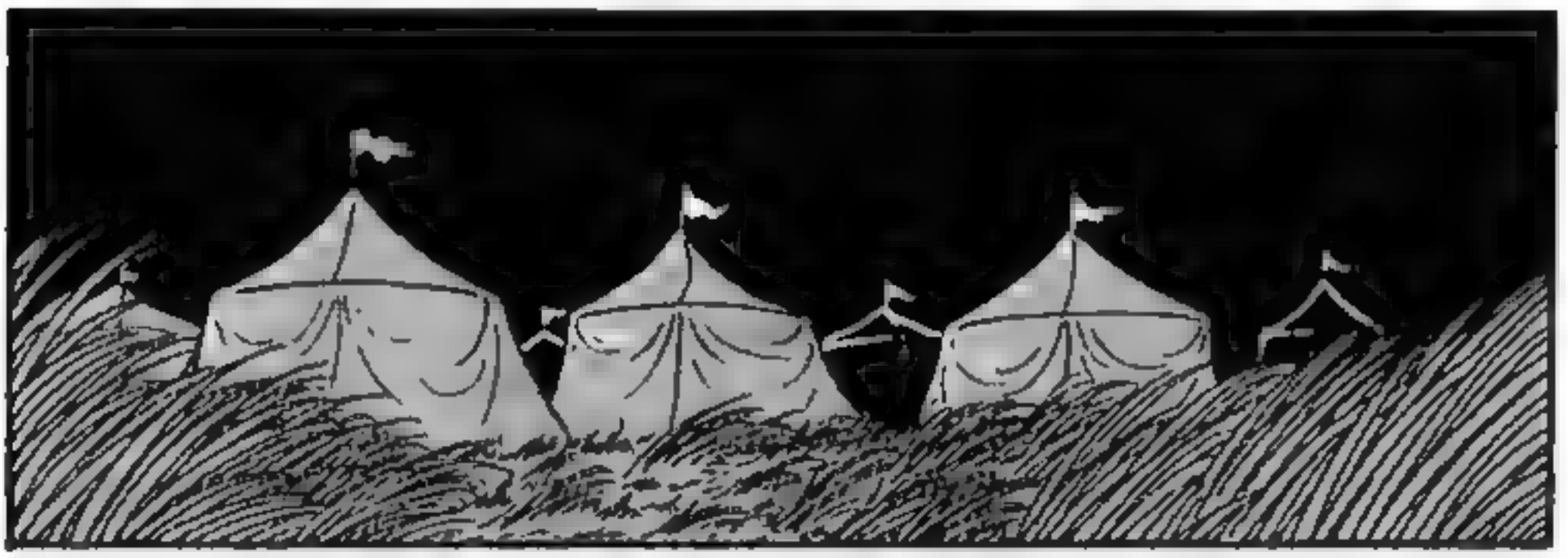
EVERYONE CARRY TEN TORCHES AND MOVE OUT!


MAKE SURE TO KEEP YOUR HEADS LOW TO AVOID BEING SPOTTED BY THE ENEMY!



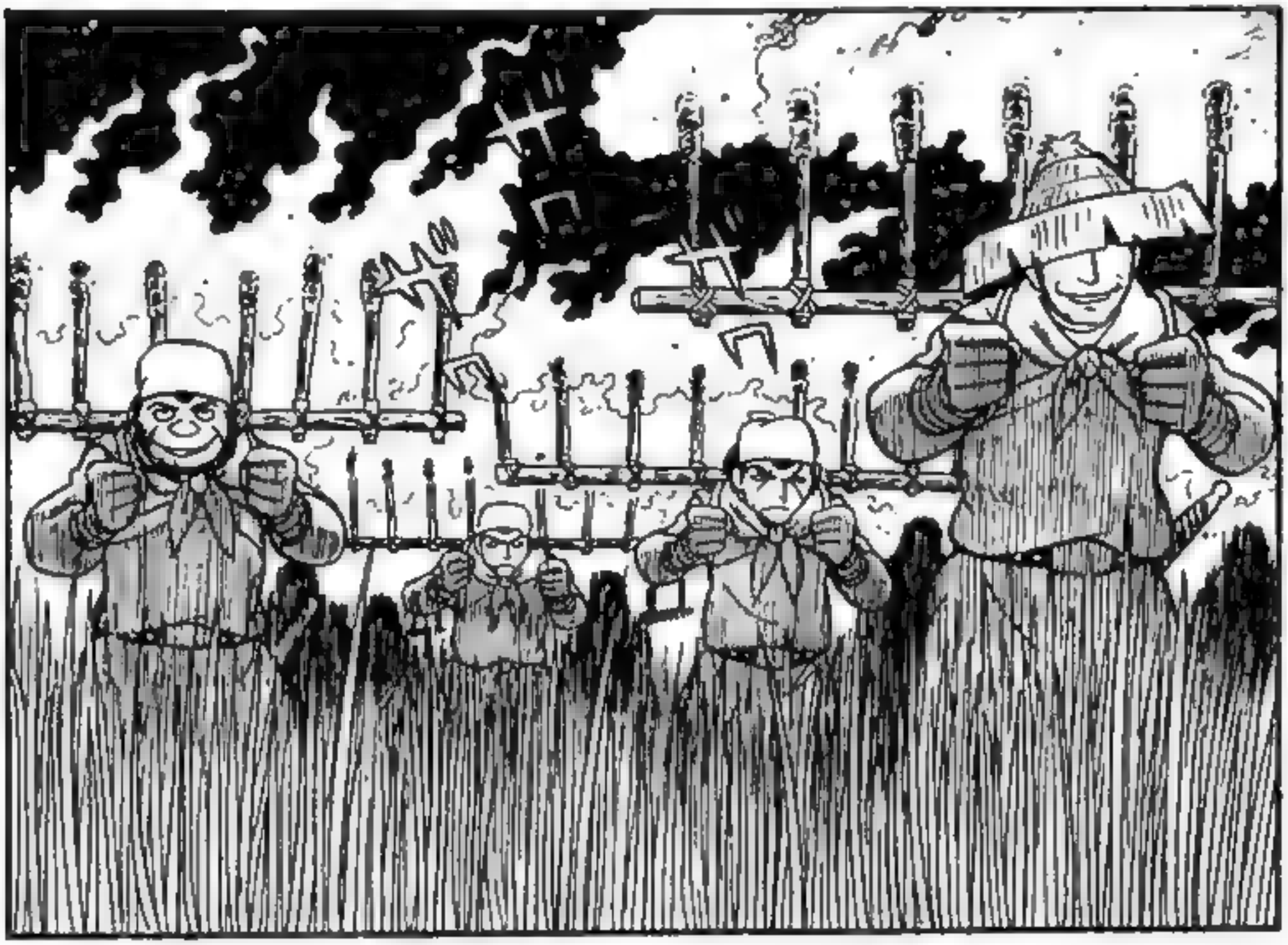






ALRIGHT, LIGHT THE TORCHES.

BROTHER, I CAN SEE THEIR BASE NOW.



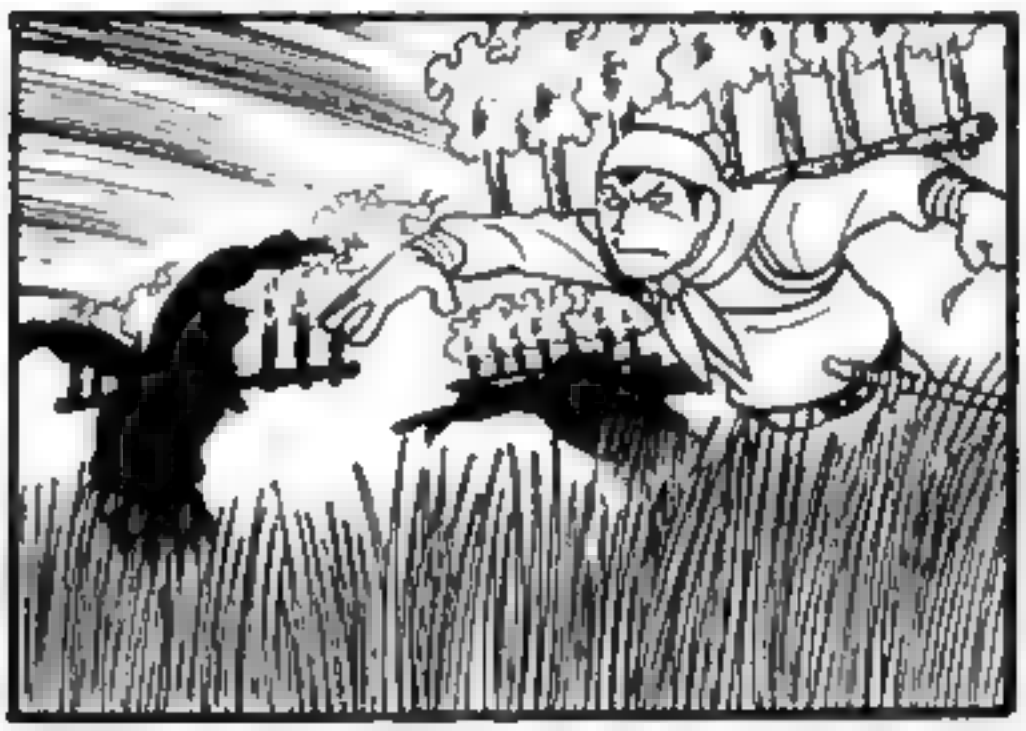
ALRIGHT, RING THE GONG AND ATTACK!

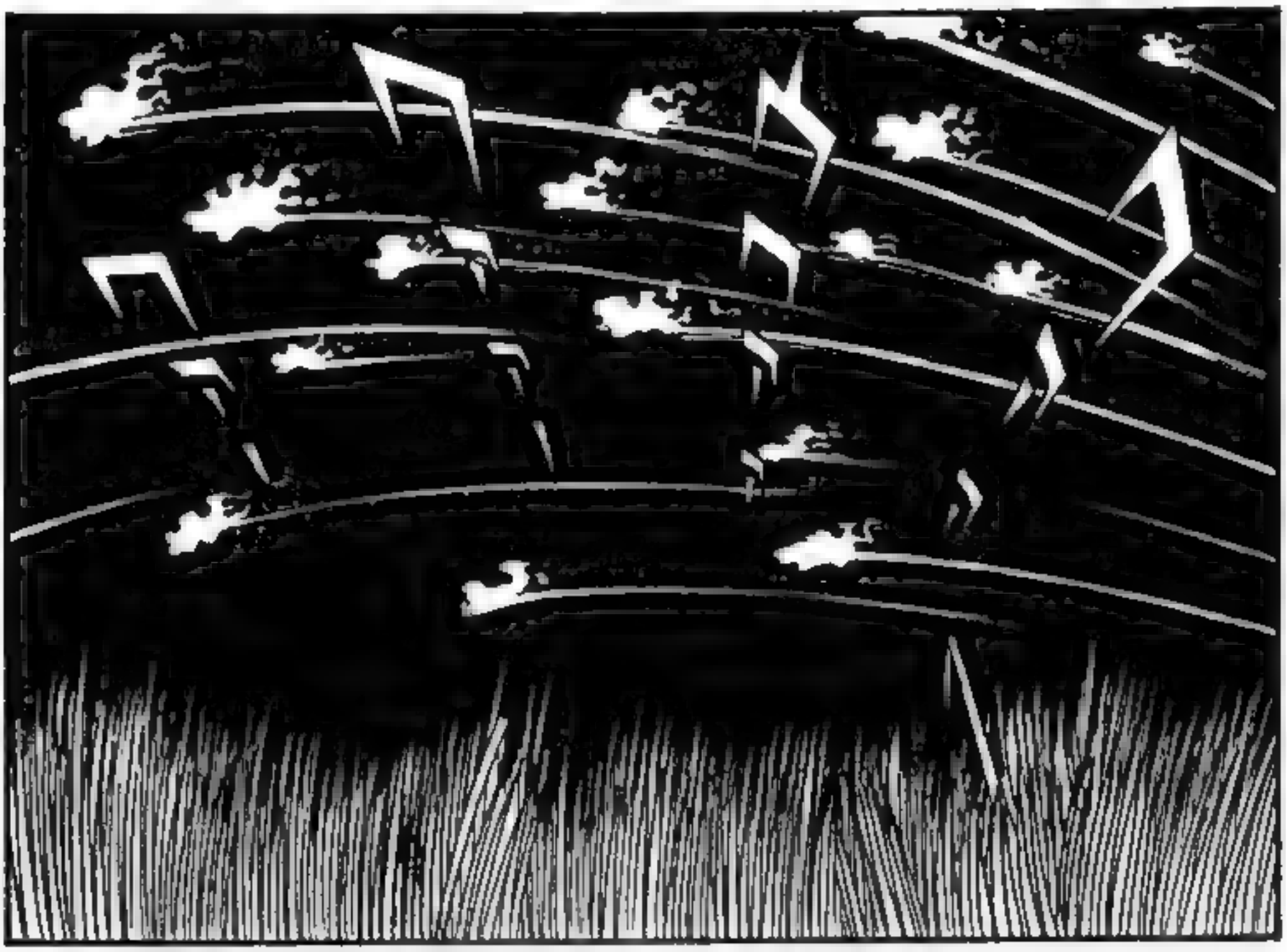
LOOK!

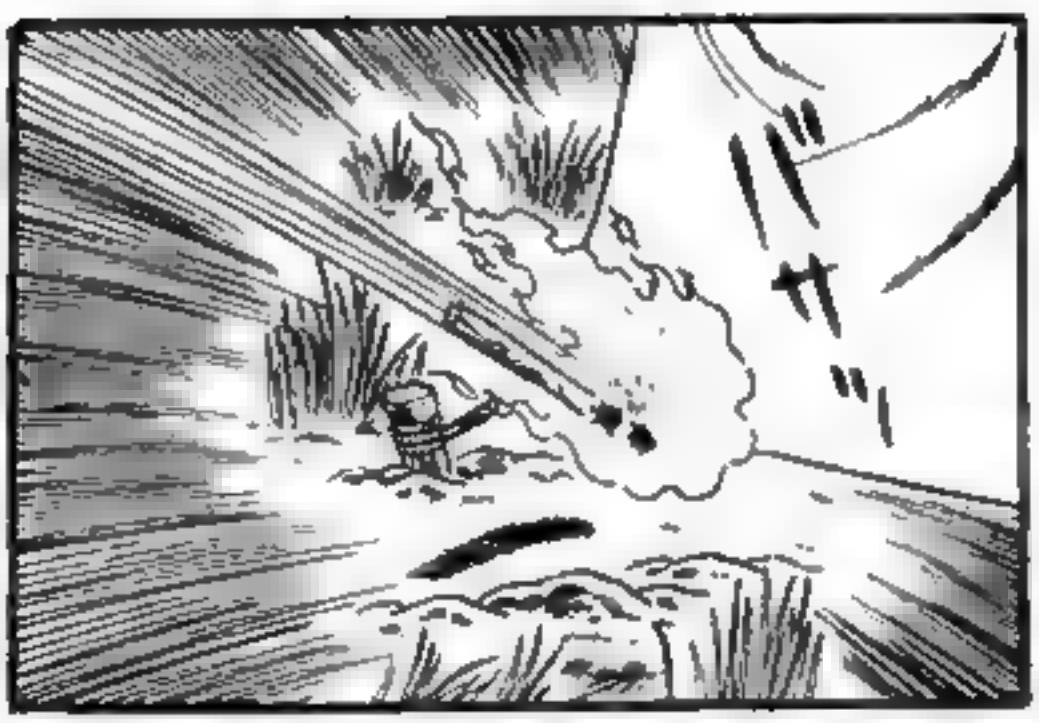
AHH!

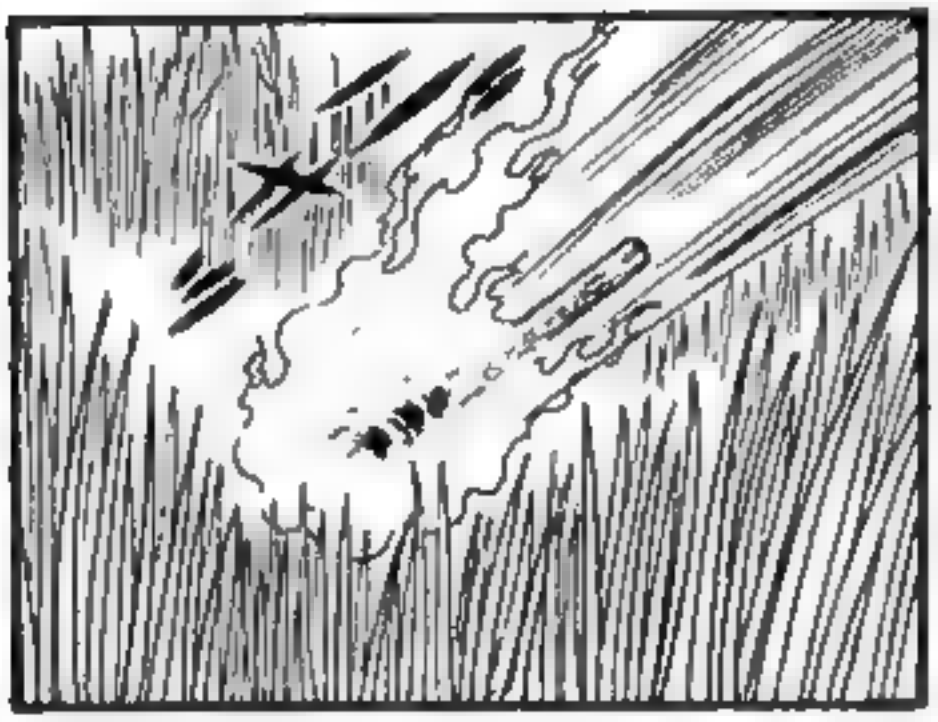
IT'S A RAID! IT LOOKS LIKE THERE'S AROUND 5000 MEN!

NOW THROW THE TORCHES!









WE'RE GOING TO BE KILLED!
AGHHH!

NOW CHARGE!

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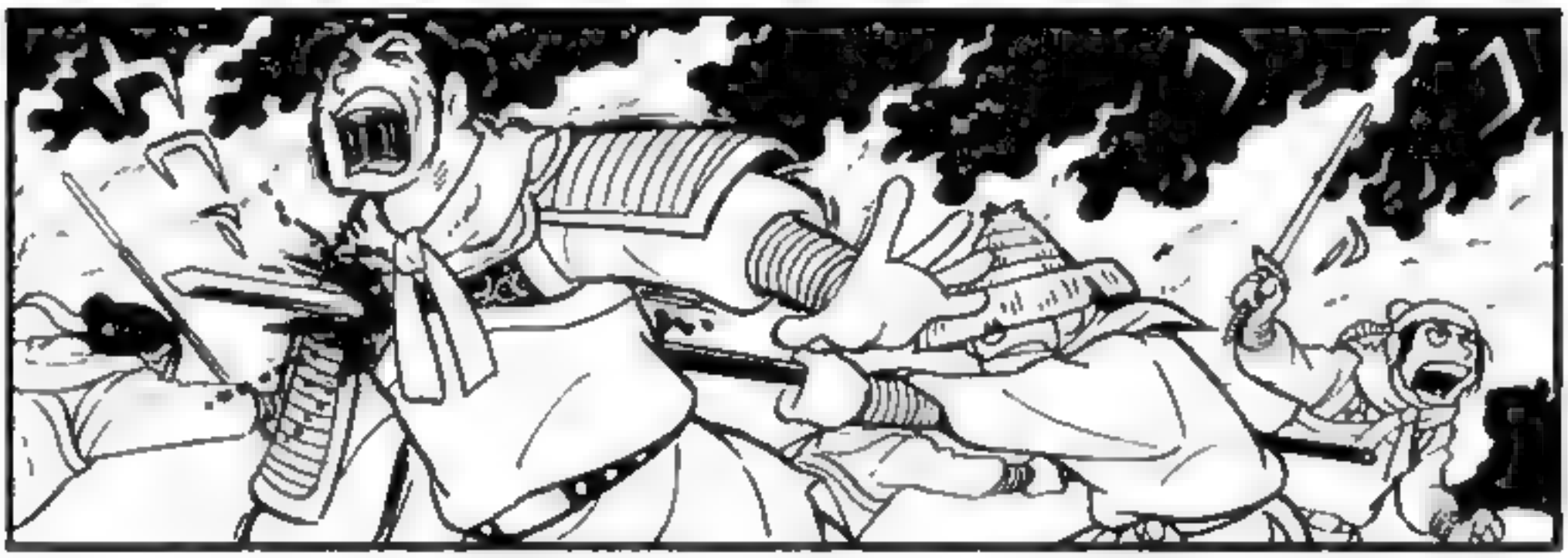


AH!

LOOK, IT'S A SUCCESS! THE REBELS HAVE PULLED BACK!

AND WHOM MIGHT YOU BE?
WE ARE A CAVALRY UNIT OF 5000 MEN SENT DIRECTLY FROM LUOYANG.

AND WHO ARE YOU!? ARE YOU WITH THE REBELS OR THE HAN ARMY!?

THEN YOU MUST BE SPECIAL REINFORCEMENTS SENT TO HELP OUT GENERAL ZHU JUN!

FROM LUO-YANG...

WE ARE A VOLUNTEER ARMY THAT GATHERED TO DEFEND THE COUNTRY WE LOVE. I AM THE LEADER, LIU BEI XUANDE.

PLEASE EXCUSE US FOR OUR CURT BEHAVIOUR, IT WAS ONLY BECAUSE WE WERE IN THE MIDST OF BATTLE.

THANKS TO YOU, WE EFFORTLESSLY KILLED THE RETREATING REBELS.

BUT WHAT A MAGNIFICENT TACTIC THIS WAS.

I SEE, AND MY NAME IS CAO CAO, COURTESY NAME, MENGDE. UNDER THE ORDERS FROM HEADQUARTERS, I'VE BEEN ASKED TO COMMAND THIS CAVALRY UNIT HERE.

SO SHALL WE CRY OUT THE CALL FOR VICTORY TOGETHER?

WE ARE ALL MEN FIGHTING FOR THE SAME GOAL OF PEACE.

NO, NO. TONIGHT'S SUCCESS WAS ALL DUE TO YOUR BRILLIANT PLANNING. IT WOULD BE BETTER IF YOU SHOUTED IT FIRST.

NO, PLEASE. I INSIST YOU TAKE THE HONOURS OF GOING FIRST.

I SHALL AGREE TO THAT.

THEN LET US SAY IT TOGETHER.

VICTORY IS OURS!

VICTORY IS OURS!

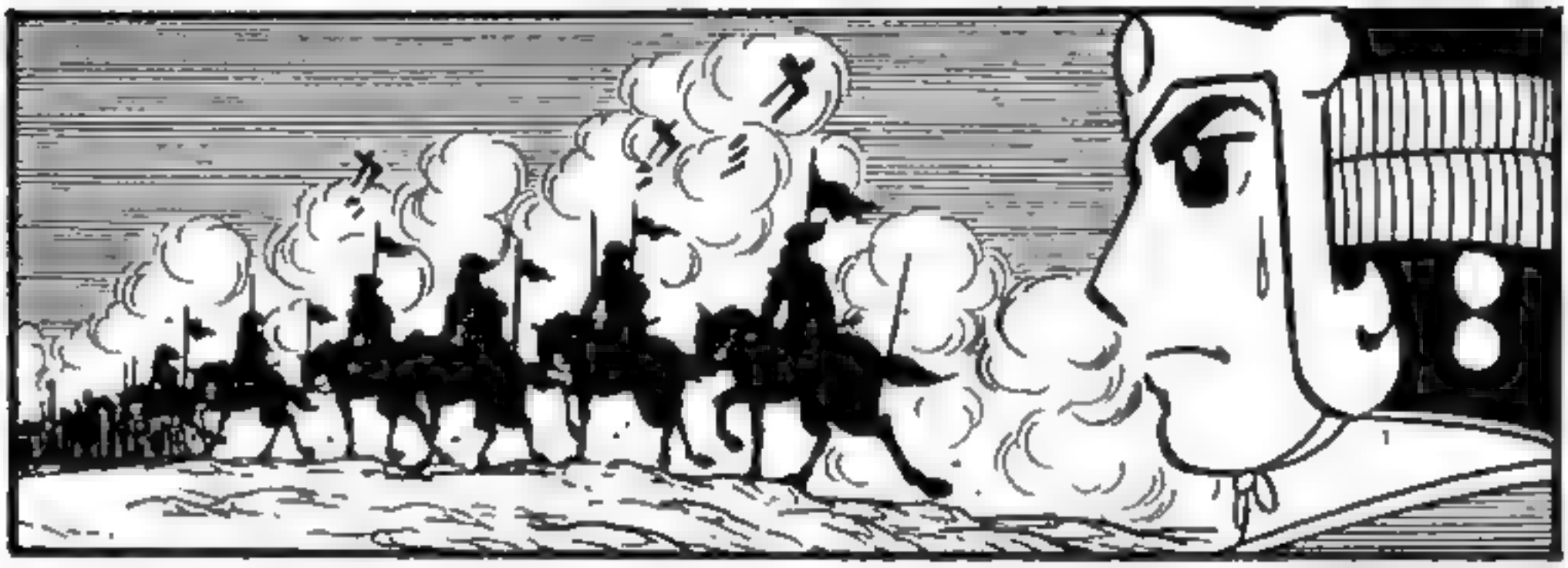
YES.
HOW GREAT IT IS TO FIGHT AND ACHIEVE VICTORY UNDER THE SAME CAUSE.

WELL THEN, PLEASE EXCUSE US BUT WE HAVE OTHER ORDERS TO CARRY OUT AND SO I MUST GET GOING.

ALRIGHT MEN!

MOVE OUT!

UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN, LIU BEI. I WISH YOU THE BEST OF LUCK.



ALRIGHT, THEN LET US PULL BACK FOR NOW TOO.

HAHA, I THOUGHT THE OFFICIAL HAN ARMY WAS ONLY FULL OF INCOMPETENT GUYS BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THERE ARE SOME CAPABLE ONES TOO.

PULL BACK, MEN!

BROTHER LIU BEI, WE HAVE SCORED A STUNNING DEFEAT WITH A MERE 500 MEN. JUST WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING SO WORRIED FOR?

HM?

I GET THE FEELING THAT HE'LL PLAY A GREAT ROLE TO THE FUTURE OF THIS COUNTRY SOMEHOW.

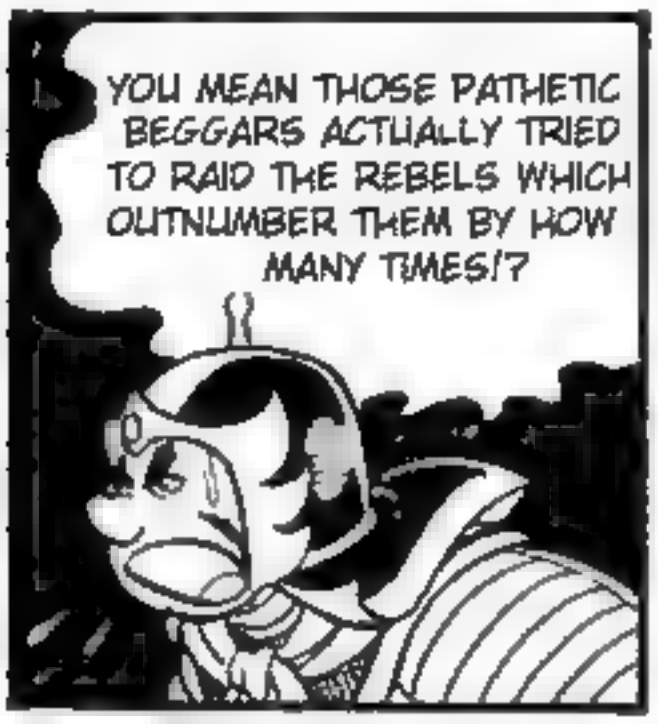
THAT MAN MAY BE YOUNG BUT HE'S QUITE SKILLED AND LEARNED IN THE ART OF WAR.

HIS PREDICTIONS WOULD PROVE TO BE TRUE AS CAO CAO WOULD BECOME HIS GREATEST RIVAL IN THE DISTANT FUTURE.

EVEN WHILE CRYING OUT THE CALL OF VICTORY, LIU BEI'S MIND NEVER ONCE STOPPED THINKING OF CAO CAO

BIRD OF PASSAGE

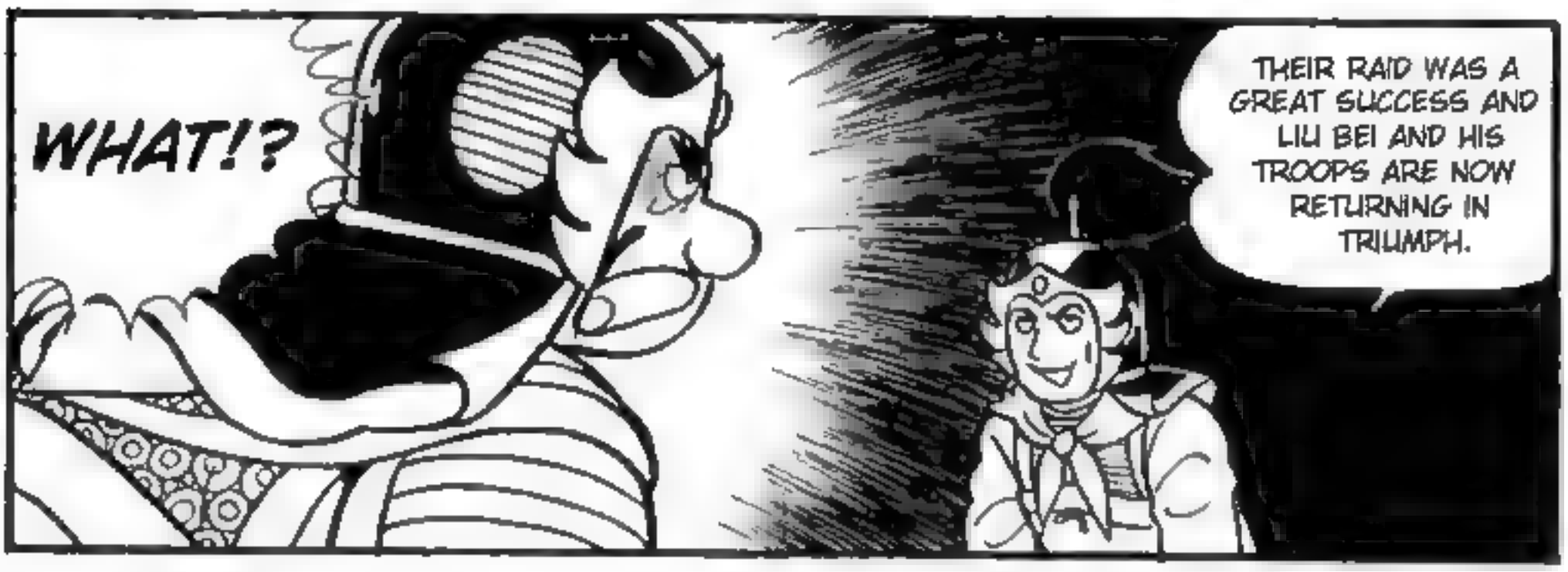
WHAT!


YOU MEAN THOSE PATHETIC BEGGARS ACTUALLY TRIED TO RAID THE REBELS WHICH OUTNUMBER THEM BY HOW MANY TIMES!?

NO, THOSE ARE THE FIRES STARTED BY LIU BEI XUANDE'S TROOPS FOR THEIR OWN NIGHT RAID.
IS IT AN ENEMY RAID?

WELL, ABOUT THAT...
SO WERE THEY ALL WIPED OUT?

THEY DON'T KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT BATTLE TACTICS NOR STRATEGY!
THOSE FOOLS WHO CAN'T EVEN VALUE THEIR OWN LIVES...


WHAT!?
THEIR RAID WAS A GREAT SUCCESS AND LIU BEI AND HIS TROOPS ARE NOW RETURNING IN TRIUMPH.

T-THEY MANAGED TO DRIVE BACK THE REBELS WITH A MERE 500 MEN!?

THE RAID WAS A GREAT SUCCESS, AND THE REBELS HAVE BEEN DRIVEN AWAY.

S-SAY THAT AGAIN!?

WAIT...

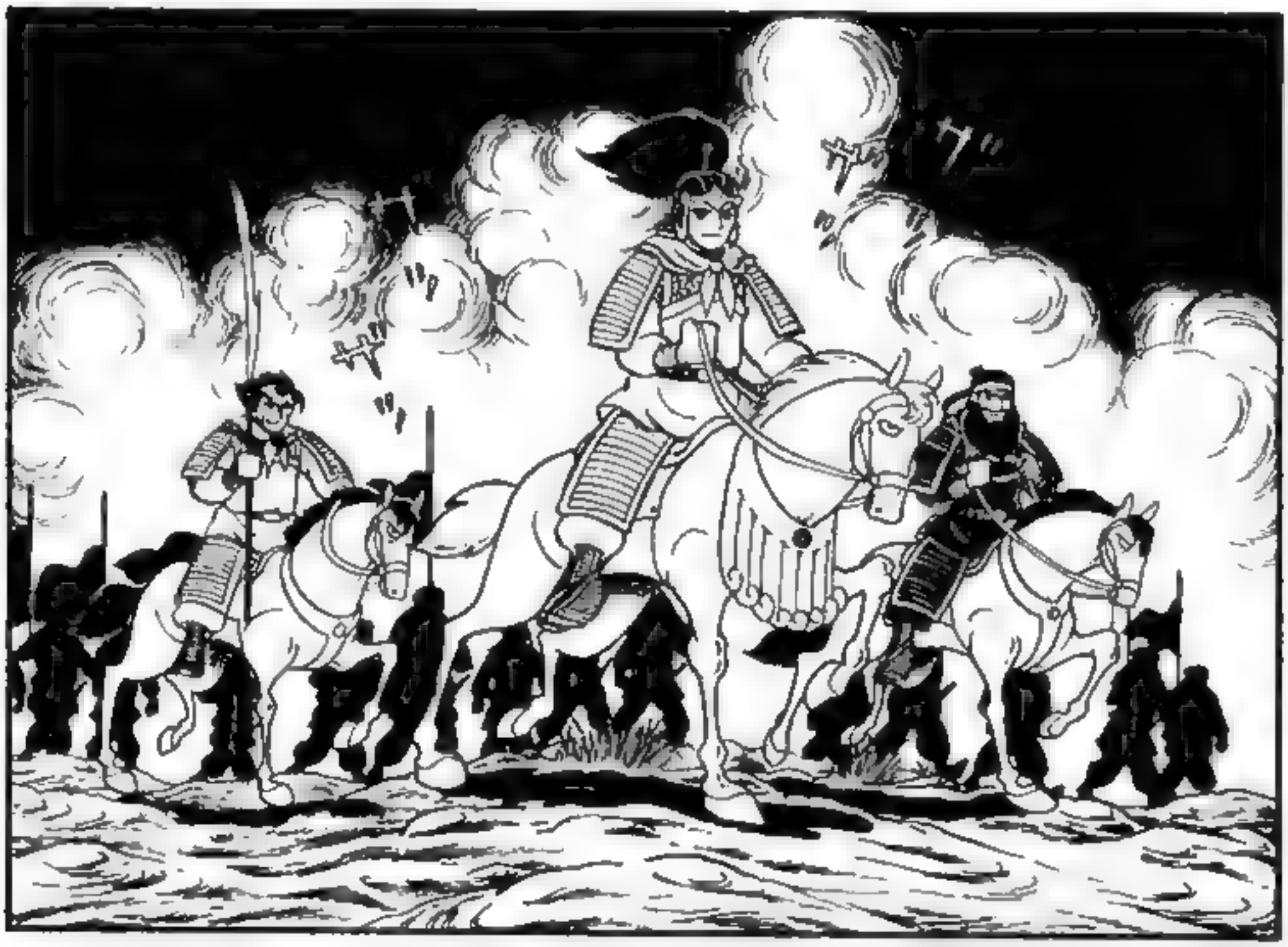
HAHA, THAT'S GREAT TO HEAR! THAT MAN'S QUITE CAPABLE FOR HIS AGE!

THEN WOULDN'T THAT MAKE ME LOOK LIKE I'M INCOMPETENT...?

IF THAT BEGGAR CORPS OF ONLY 500 MEN MANAGED TO DRIVE BACK THE REBEL FORCES IN JUST ONE NIGHT EVEN THOUGH I HAD BEEN TRYING FOR SEVERAL MONTHS...

HEY, HERE COME THE VICTORIOUS BEGGARS!

THAT'S NOT GOOD...



.....

YES SIR.

BRING LIU BEI TO ME RIGHT AWAY.

HAHA, MAYBE HE WANTS TO TREAT US TO A DRINK?

MAYBE.

GENERAL ZHU JUN WISHES TO SPEAK WITH YOU.

YES, WE HAVE DRIVEN BACK THE REBELS SUCCESSFULLY.

THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT'S WRONG!

DO YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU HAVE JUST DONE?

BUT YOU WENT AHEAD AND MESSED IT ALL UP!

I WAS TYING DOWN THE REBELS HERE.

I'VE BEEN WORKING TIRELESSLY TO PREVENT THAT WORST-CASE SCENARIO FROM HAPPENING!!

NOW THE REBEL FORCES AT GUANGZONG WILL BECOME EVEN GREATER AND GENERAL LU ZHI WILL HAVE A EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TIME!!

JUST WHERE DO YOU THINK THOSE REBELS WHO'VE RETREATED WILL GO TO!? TO GUANGZONG OF COURSE!!

BUT YOU'VE IRRESPONSIBLY MESSED EVERYTHING UP! HMPH, I SHOULDN'T HAVE EXPECTED MERE FARMERS AND PEASANTS TO KNOW OF THE ART OF WAR.

WHAT!

BUT WHAT'S DONE IS DONE. YOU MUST NOW DEPART IMMEDIATELY TOMORROW TO AID GENERAL LU ZHI.

IS THAT NOT A LITTLE OUT OF LINE BY SAYING THAT TO US, THE HEROES!

ZHANG FEI, QUIET!

HMPH, I'M DONE DEALING WITH YOU IGNORANT FOOLS.

WHEW...

IF YOU UNDER-STAND THEN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!
ZHANG FEI, I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL BUT,

NNGH...!

BUT THEY COULD HAVE AT LEAST COMPLIMENTED US AND TREAT OUR MEN TO A DRINK!

BUT INSTEAD, HE'S SENDING US OFF TO ANOTHER PLACE TOMORROW WITHOUT EVEN A REST!?

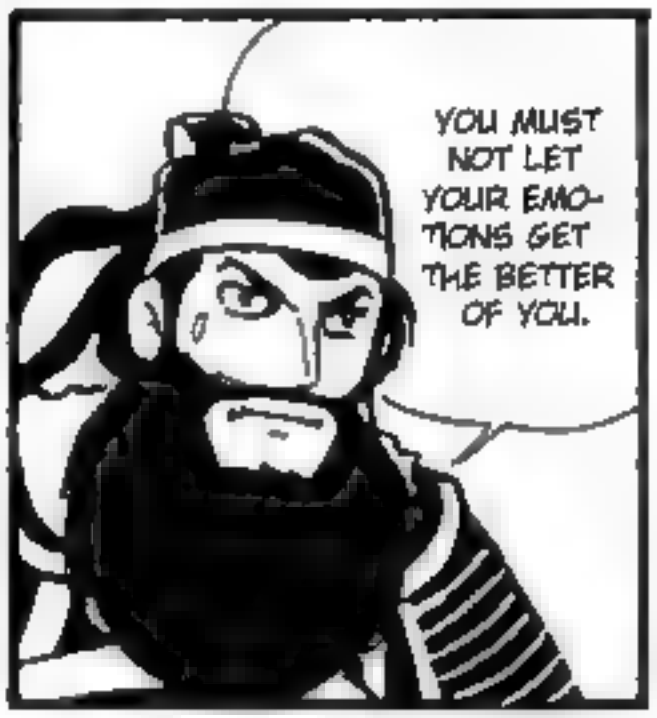
EVEN IF WE ARE IN THE RIGHT, WE ARE NOT PART OF THE OFFICIAL HAN ARMY. EVEN IF WE ARE COURAGEOUS, WE DO NOT HOLD THE OFFICIAL FLAGS OF HAN. IN THE END, WE ARE NOTHING MORE THAN A MERE VOLUNTEER ARMY TO BE USED BY THE OFFICIAL ARMY...

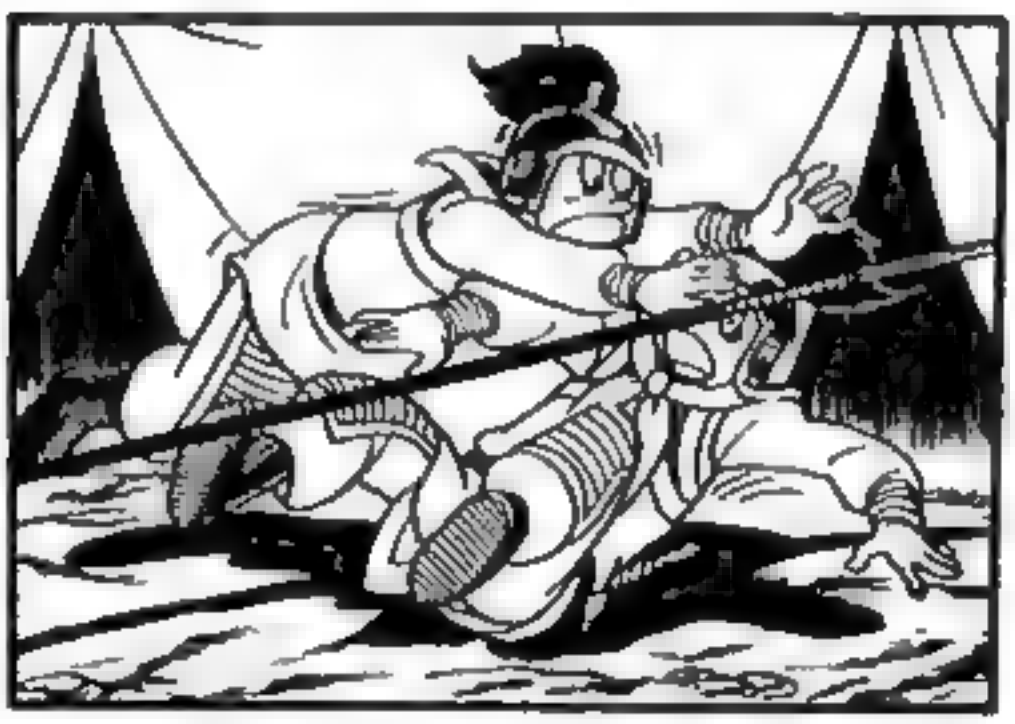
JUST HOW DO WE EXPLAIN THIS TO OUR BRAVE MEN WHO SUCCEEDED IN DRIVING BACK THE REBELS?

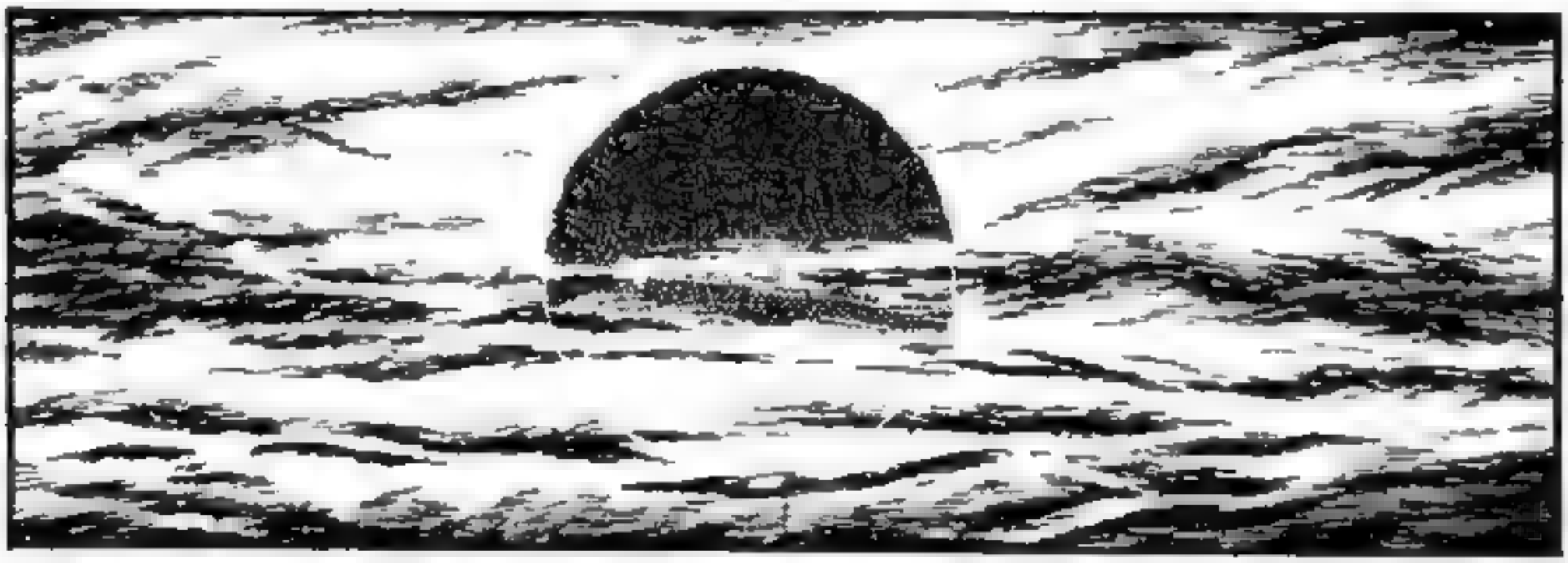
IT IS AS BROTHER SAYS. DID WE NOT GATHER FOR A GREATER PURPOSE?

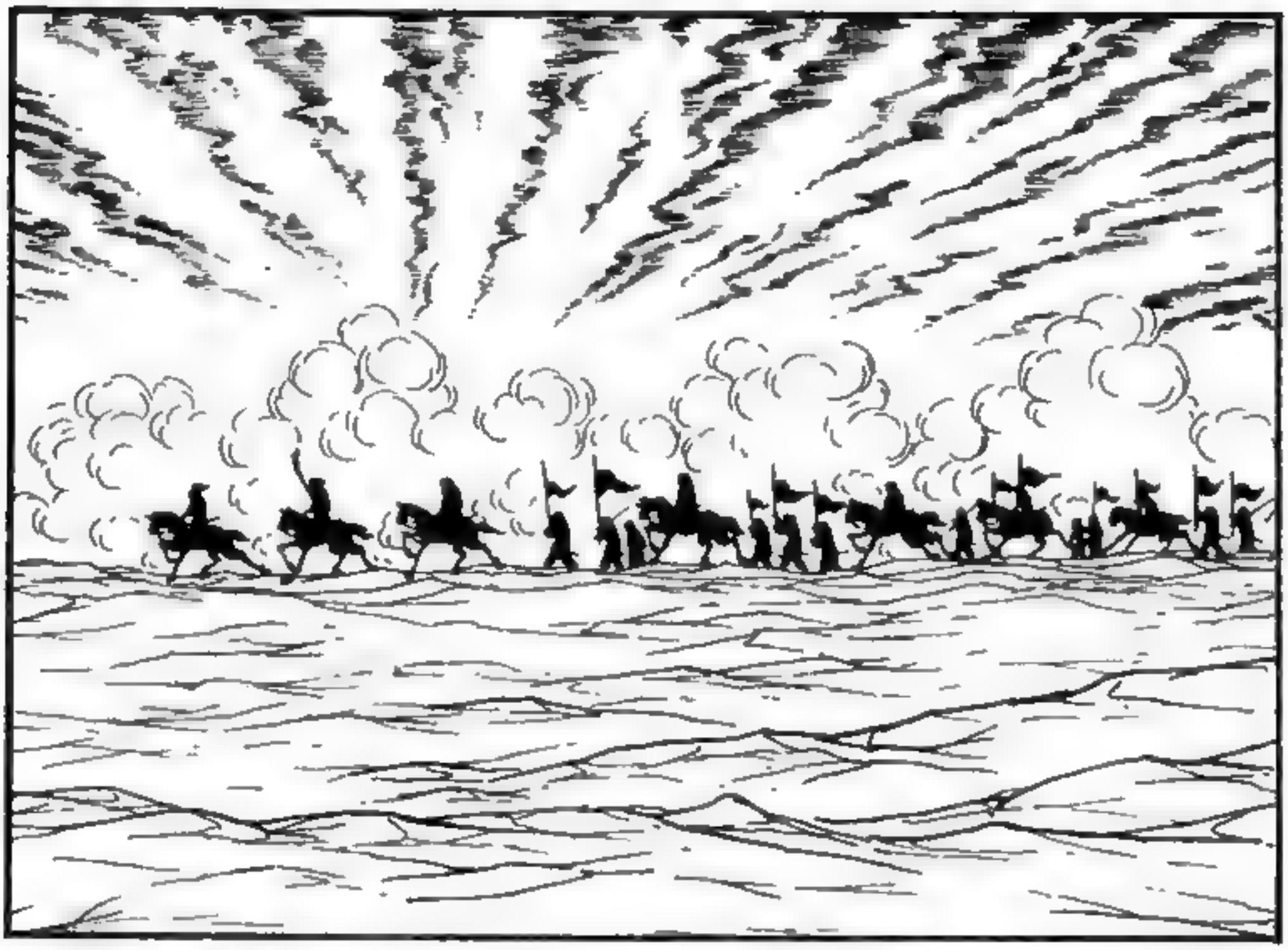
ZHANG FEI, GETTING ANGRY HERE AND FIGHTING WITH THE OFFICIAL ARMY WILL ONLY BRING US UNNECCESSARY TROUBLE AND GOES AGAINST WHAT WE STAND FOR.

YEAH YEAH, BUT I CAN'T HELP BUT BE ANGRY.


YOU MUST NOT LET YOUR EMO-TIONS GET THE BETTER OF YOU.







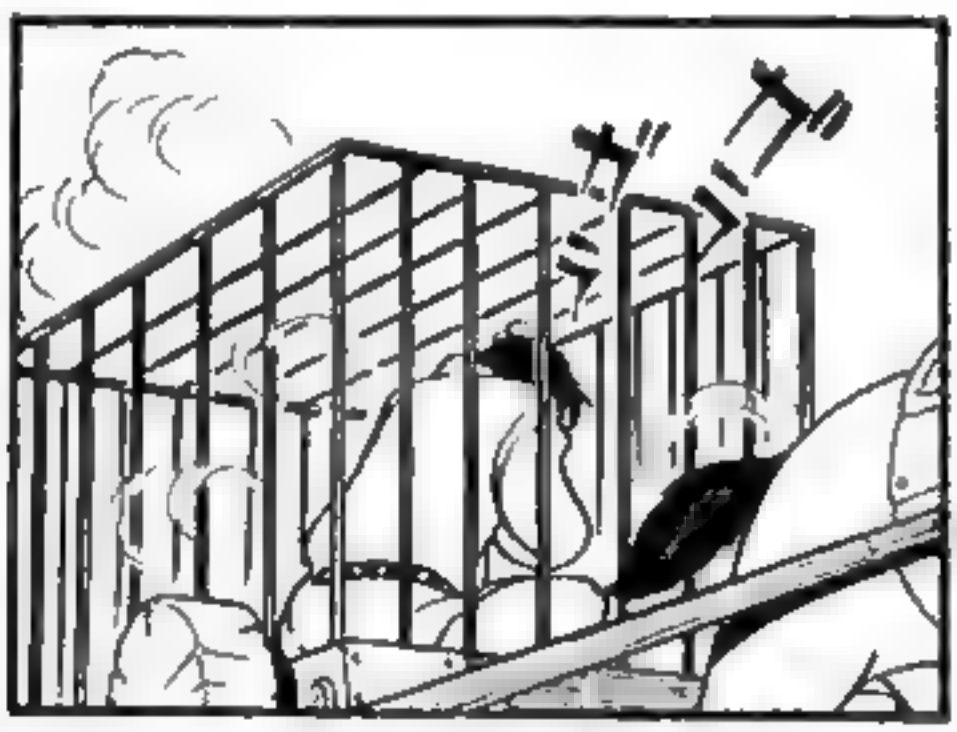
BUT IT NOW DOES SEEM TRUE THAT THE REASON FOR ALL THE CHAOS IN THE WORLD TODAY LIES WITHIN THE OFFICERS AND THE COURT OFFICIALS.

NO, NOT YET.
WELL HAVE YOU MANAGED TO CALM DOWN AFTER A NIGHT'S REST?

HMM?

I'M SURE THERE ARE PLENTY OF GENERALS AND COURT OFFICIALS OF THAT SORT AT LUOYANG.

THEY SEEM TO BE TRANS-PORTING A PRISONER.
IT'S THE HAN ARMY.



WHO THE HELL ARE YOU PEOPLE! MOVE OUT OF THE WAY!

WHAT?

W-WHAT!

WHAT WAS THAT YOU INSECTS!?

ANYONE WHO KNOWS NOT OF PROPER RESPECT ARE AS WORTH-LESS AS INSECTS.
HMPH, SHUT YOUR MOUTH!

DO YOU NOT SEE THAT WE ARE THE HAN ARMY FROM OUR FLAGS? YOU STILL DARE CALL US INSECTS?

ONE MUST BE COURTEOUS TO OTHERS BEFORE EXPECTING THE SAME RESPECT BACK IN RETURN. OR DO YOU THINK THAT WE ARE WORTHLESS HUMANS NOT DESERVING OF SUCH RESPECT?

DO NOT THINK OF YOURSELVES AS THE ONLY ONES WITH FLAGS!! OR IS IT THAT YOU LACK EYES TO SEE THEM?

WE ARE ALSO SOLDIERS WHO'VE FOUGHT AGAINST THE YELLOW SCARF REBELS ALONG-SIDE GENERAL ZHU JUN.

PLEASE EXCUSE US. I ADMIT IT WAS OUR MISTAKE TO TREAT YOU RUDELY FIRST.

WHAT?

WE ARE OF THE HAN ARMY HEADING TO LUOYANG TO TRANSPORT PRISONER LU ZHI, WHO WAS FORMERLY THE GENERAL IN CHARGE OF LEADING THE FORCES IN GUANGZONG.

WE DO NOT KNOW OF THE EXACT REASONS, BUT IT SEEMS THAT THE EUNUCH ZUO FENG FROM THE CAPITAL WHO WAS SENT TO INSPECT THE FORCES AT GUANGZONG FOUND SOME FAULT WITH HIM.

FOR WHAT CRIME WAS GENERAL LU ZHI ARRESTED?

HMM?

PLEASE SIR, GENERAL LU ZHI IS MY BELOVED MENTOR AND TEACHER. WOULD YOU LET ME AT LEAST SEE HIM?

THAT... MUST BE A LIE...

OFFICIAL PROCEDURES GET IN THE WAY OF ALLOWING YOU THAT PRIVILEGE...

IS THAT SO? WELL, I WOULD LOVE TO LET YOU DO THAT BUT...

BROTHER,

IT'S NOT SOMETHING I CAN REALLY DECIDE MYSELF...

PLEASE OFFICER, I BEG OF YOU.

I THINK THIS MAN IS ASKING FOR A BRIBE.

ALRIGHT, EVERYONE TAKE A SHORT RESPITE!

TEACHER!

WHAT HAPPENED TEACHER?

OHH, XUANDE!

BUT THAT MAN DEMANDED A BRIBE FROM ME. I REFUSED HIM BY REPLYING THAT THE SPARSE MONEY THAT WE HAVE LEFT, WILL BE USED TO BUY RATIONS AND OTHER SUPPLIES.

AN IMPERIAL MESSENGER FROM THE CAPITAL BY THE NAME OF ZUO FENG CAME FOR A ROUTINE INSPECTION AND UPDATE ON THE STATUS. SO I THEN TRUTHFULLY REPORTED THE SITUATION.

AH, IT HAPPENED SHORTLY AFTER YOU LEFT FOR YINGCHUAN.

IT SEEMS AS IF HONESTY ISN'T WORTH A CENT IN THESE CHAOTIC TIMES.

AND THAT WAS MY CRIME. ZUO FENG REPORTED BACK TO THE CAPITAL THAT I HAD IGNORED HIM AND ACCUSED ME OF FALSE CHARGES.

BUT THEY CANNOT POSSIBLY PUNISH AN INOCENT MAN. I'M SURE YOU SHALL BE PARDONED WITHIN DUE TIME.

THANK YOU.

I HAD HEARD OF RUMORS THAT THE OFFICIALS OF LUOYANG HAVE BECOME NOTHING MORE THAN CORRUPT WOLVES SEEKING TO FILL ONLY THEIR OWN STOMACHS BUT I HAD NEVER THOUGHT IT WOULD REALLY BE LIKE THIS! IF THIS CONTINUES, THIS COUNTRY WILL NOT LAST MUCH LONGER.

YES, TEACHER.

LIU BEI, YOU ARE STILL YOUNG! PLEASE CREATE A NEW WORLD FOR THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE!

BROTHER, WILL YOU REALLY JUST STAND STILL AND LET THIS HAPPEN?

ALRIGHT, IT'S TIME TO GET GOING AGAIN.

WITH MY STRENGTH, I CAN BREAK THIS CAGE EASILY.

I CANNOT BEAR TO LET THIS HAPPEN, I MUST HELP GENERAL LU ZHI!

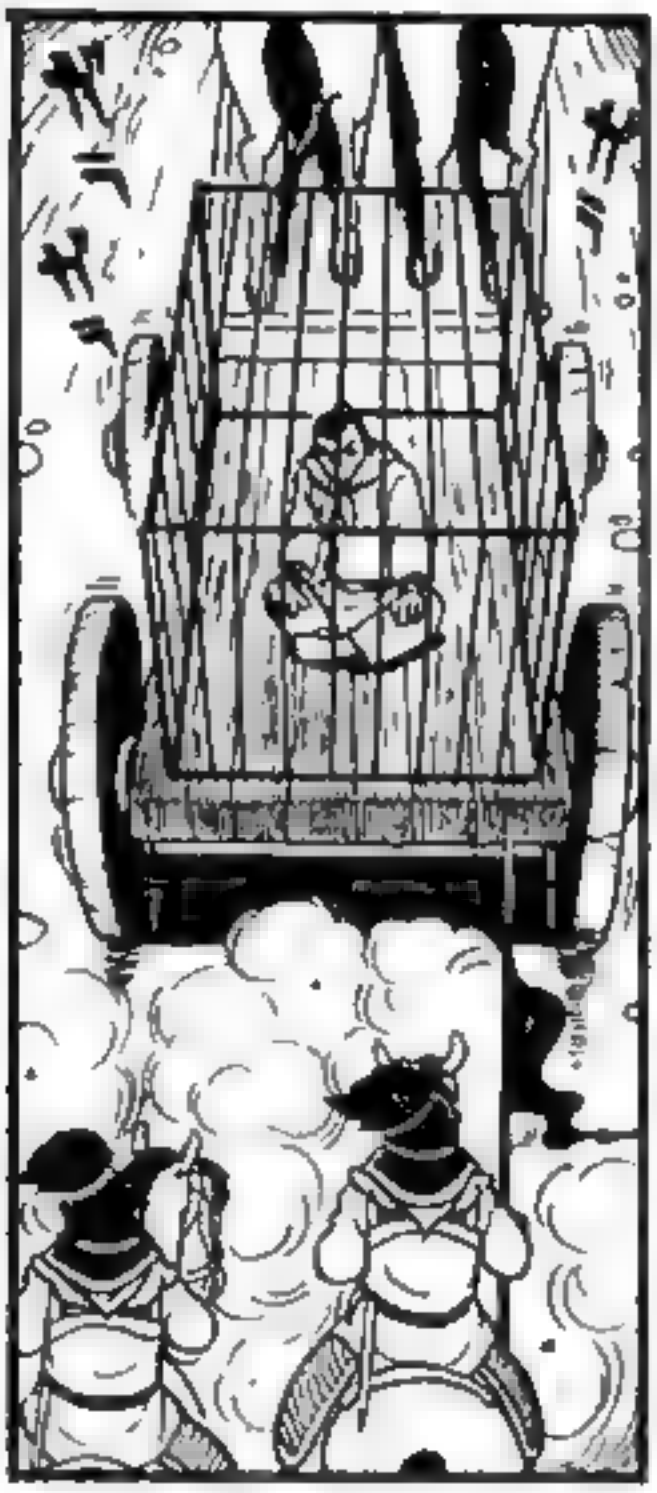
YOU JUST HEARD WHAT THE GENERAL SAID, HE'S INNOCENT! IT'S THAT DAMN OFFICIAL WHO IS GUILTY!

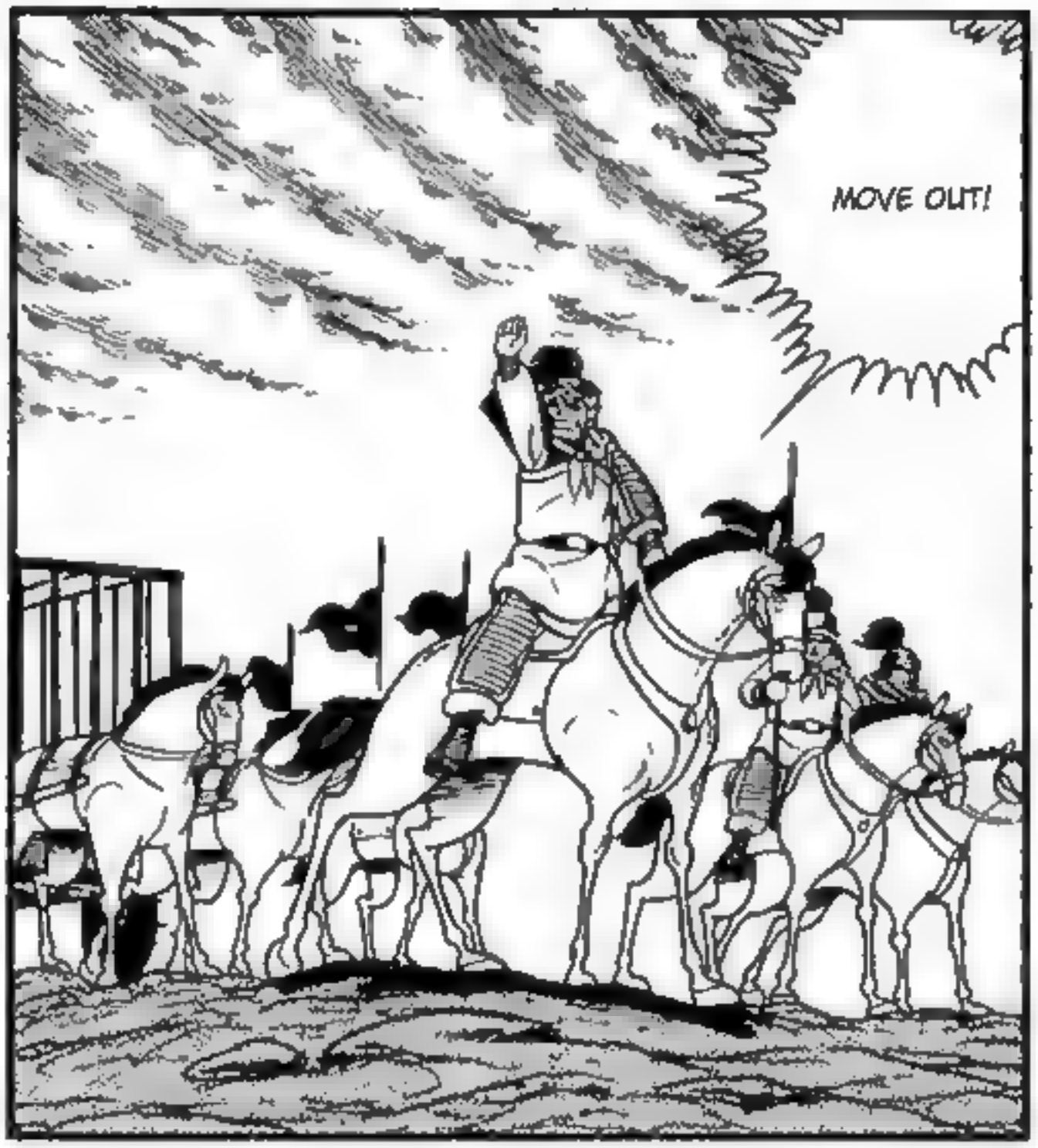
FREEING ME AND GOING AGAINST THE HAN ARMY HERE WILL MEAN THAT YOU WILL BE TREATED THE SAME AS THE REBELS.

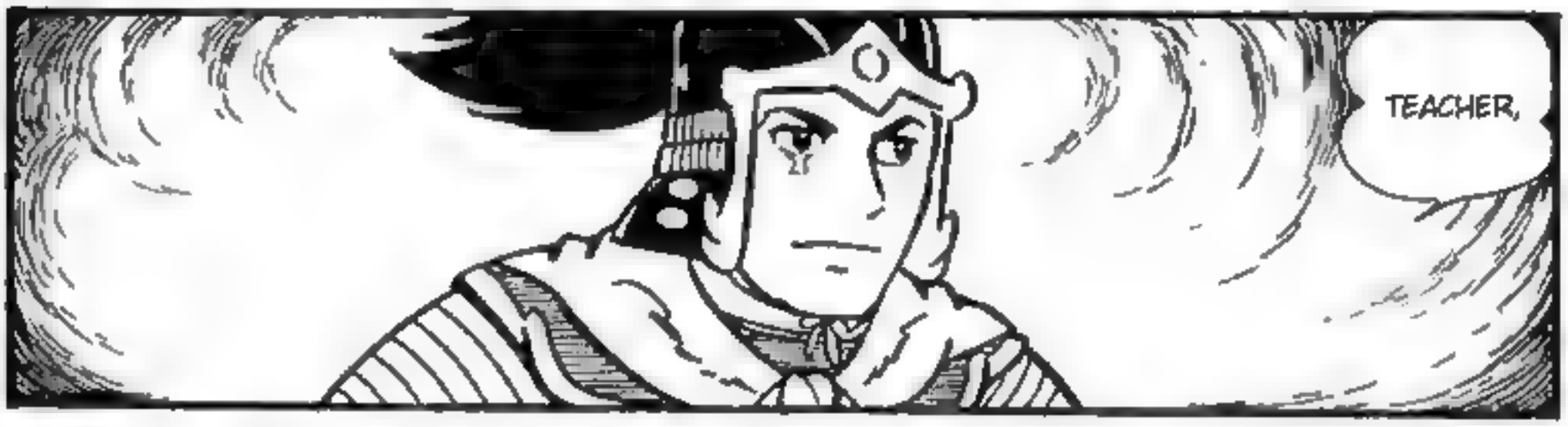
STOP, ZHANG FEI!

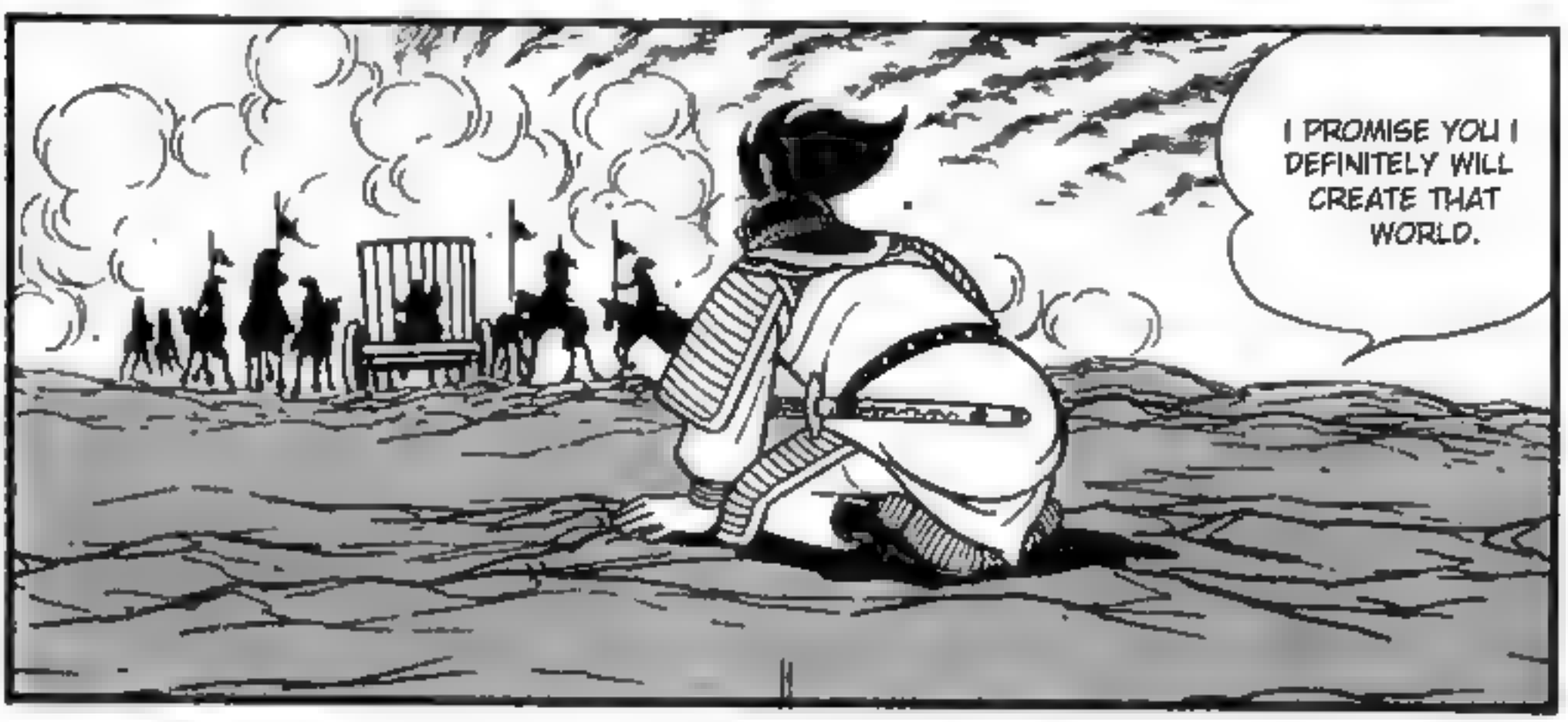
LIU BEI, NEVER LOSE SIGHT OF THE BRIGHT FUTURE!

AND THEN LIU BEI WILL BE PUT INTO A TROUBLESOME SITUATION.




MOVE OUT!


TEACHER,


I PROMISE YOU I DEFINITELY WILL CREATE THAT WORLD.

WHAT IS IT?

HMM?

AH!

I SHALL GO CHECK IT OUT.

ZHANG FEI, WHAT'S THE SITUATION?

THEY ARE ON THE VERGE OF BEING WIPED OUT BY THE REBELS.

IT'S THE TROOPS OF GUANGZONG FORMERLY LED BY GENERAL LU ZHI.

HAHA, THE ONLY REASON WHY YOU COULD WITHSTAND THE REBELS WHO OUTNUMBER YOU BY 3 TIMES WAS ALL DUE TO GENERAL LU ZHI'S TALENTS. DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU STAND A CHANCE NOW?

DID WE NOT GATHER TO PROTECT THE PEACE AND THE PEOPLE?

WHAT SHOULD WE DO, BROTHER?

WE SHALL GO RESCUE THEM.

JUST BECAUSE THERE ARE A FEW CORRUPT PEOPLE IN THE ARMY DOES NOT MEAN WE CAN LET THEM ALL BE KILLED.

CHARGE!

WHAT'S THAT?

HUH?

I'LL BE ESPE-CIALLY VIOLENT TO YOU SINCE I'M IN A FOUL MOOD TODAY!

SOME ENEMY REINFORCEMENTS HAVE APPEARED OUT OF NOWHERE!

WHAT IS IT?

GAHHH!

RETREAT MEN! ENEMY REINFORCEMENTS HAVE ARRIVED!

AGHH!

THE MEN AT THE FRONT HAVE ALL BEEN KILLED ALREADY!

RUN OR BE KILLED!

RUN AWAY!

IT SEEMS THE ENEMY REINFORCEMENTS NUMBER IN THE TENS OF THOUSANDS!!

HMM, THAT WAS DANGEROUSLY CLOSE.

GENERAL DONG ZHUO, THE ATTACKING REBELS HAVE RETREATED.

YOU SAY YOU DON'T KNOW?

AH, WELL...

SO WHO ARE THESE TROOPS THAT CAME TO OUR MEN'S AID?

YES SIR.

THEN ESCORT THEM HERE AT ONCE. I WOULD LIKE TO THANK THEM.

YES, I AM THE LEADER.

ARE YOU THE TROOPS WHO CAME TO OUR AID?

UNDER-STOOD.

GENERAL DONG ZHUO WISHES TO SPEAK WITH YOU.

AH, ARE YOU THE LEADER OF THE TROOPS WHO SAVED MY MEN?

WHICH UNIT MIGHT YOU BE FROM?

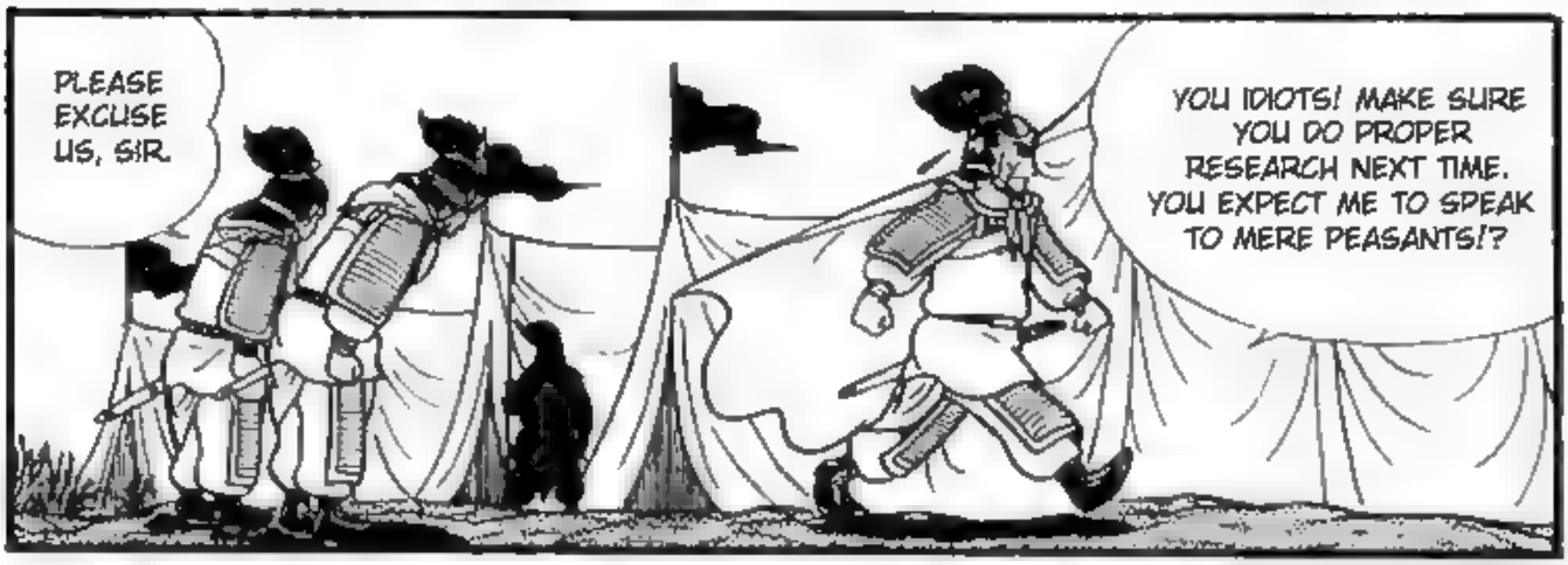
WE COME FROM NO OFFICIAL UNIT.

SO YOU'RE... PEAS- ANTS?

HMPH, SO THEN THERE IS NO NEED FOR ME TO PERSONALLY SEE YOU.

WHAT!
WE ARE A VOLUNTEER ARMY THAT GATHERED TO BRING PEACE BACK TO THESE CHAOTIC TIMES.

WELL IN ANY CASE, GOOD JOB TODAY. IF YOU CONTINUE TO FIGHT WITH US AND HELP US OUT, WE SHALL LEND YOU SOME RATIONS.


PLEASE EXCUSE US, SIR
YOU IDIOTS! MAKE SURE YOU DO PROPER RESEARCH NEXT TIME. YOU EXPECT ME TO SPEAK TO MERE PEASANTS!?

I CAN'T STAND IT ANYMORE!

NNGHH!

ZHANG FEI, WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU ARE DOING!

WHAT DOES IT MATTER IF YOU ARE OF THE OFFICIAL ARMY!? ARE WE NOT HUMAN AS WELL!?
LET ME GO! I CAN'T STAND HOW THEY CHANGE THEIR ATTITUDE TO US IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE ONCE THEY HEAR THAT WE'RE A VOLUNTEER ARMY!

THESE WORTHLESS INSECTS THAT WE RESCUED FROM CERTAIN DEATH CAN'T EVEN SAY A WORD OF THANKS BUT WOULD RATHER INSULT US INSTEAD!?

LET ME GO, GUAN YU. I'VE HAD ENOUGH!!

I CAN STAND NOT BEING REWARDED BUT I CANNOT STAND BEING IGNORED AND INSULTED!!

WHAT'S WRONG WITH BEING A VOLUNTEER ARMY!?

WE'RE WAY ABOVE THEM IF YOU COMPARE OUR LOVE FOR THIS COUNTRY!

THEN THAT WILL BE THE END OF ALL OF US.

AND WE LOSE EVERYTHING THAT WE ONCE ROSE UP FOR.

IF YOU LOSE CONTROL AND HAPPEN TO HURT ANYONE OF THE OFFICIAL ARMY,
ZHANG FEI, I UNDERSTAND YOUR FEELINGS VERY WELL BUT PLEASE, ENDURE IT.

JUST HOW MUCH LONGER, BROTHER!?

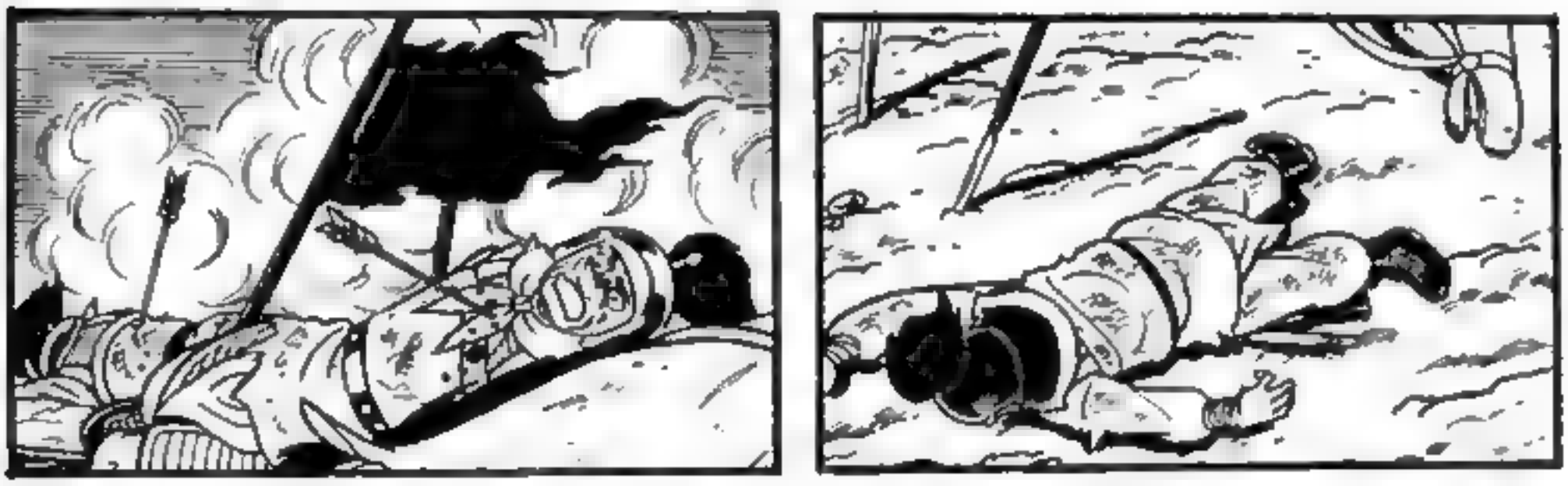
BROTHER, WE FIGHT BETTER THAN ANY OF THESE TROOPS IN THE OFFICIAL ARMY. JUST HOW MUCH LONGER MUST WE ENDURE THIS RIDICULE!?

IT IS SO VEXING I COULD DIE!

BIRDS OF PASSAGE, WE ARE!

WE SHARE THE SAME FATE AS THOSE BIRDS OF PASSAGE FLYING THROUGH THE SKY. WE FLY HERE AND THERE, WITHOUT EVER BEING ACCEPTED. WHAT LONELY BIRDS WE ARE...

A STRUGGLE TO THE DEATH AT THE IRON GATES


ANOTHER LOSS. NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES WE FIGHT, IT ALWAYS ENDS IN OUR DEFEAT.
IF I DON'T DO SOME-THING SOON, I'LL BE RELIEVED OF MY POSITION AS GENERAL SOON.

GENERAL ZHU JUN!
カッカッ

WELL...
WHAT IS IT? ANOTHER BAD NEWS TO REPORT?

YOU MEAN THAT LIU BEI WHO DROVE BACK THE REBELS WITH ONLY 500 MEN!?

THE VOLUNTEER ARMY LED BY LIU BEI XUANDE HAVE COME BACK.

NO, NO, NO. THERE'S NO NEED FOR THAT.

LET'S GIVE THEM A WARM WELCOME.

WHAT SHALL WE DO SIR? SHOULD WE TELL THEM TO GO SOMEWHERE ELSE?

IT SEEMS THEY'VE BEEN WANDERING FROM BATTLEFIELD TO BATTELFIELD.

HAHAHA, WHAT FORTUNATE TIMING THIS IS. I NEED RECKLESS MEN LIKE THEM WHO DO NOT VALUE THEIR OWN LIVES NOW MORE THAN EVER.

WE WERE IN THE VICINITY SO WE DECIDED TO COME VISIT.

AH LIU BEI, IT'S GOOD THAT YOU'VE COME.

THEY ARE ENJOYING IT VERY MUCH AS YOU CAN SEE.

AND SO I PREPARED THE PROPER WELCOME. I WONDER IF THE ALCOHOL IS TO THEIR LIKING...?

I'M SURE YOU AND YOUR MEN HAVE HAD QUITE A BIT OF TROUBLE WANDERING FROM PLACE TO PLACE.

AHAHAHA, THAT IS *GOOD* TO KNOW!

I HAVE PREPARED A SPECIAL TABLE FOR YOU 3 GENTLEMEN. THIS WAY, PLEASE.

WHAT A TURN OF EVENT THIS IS, BROTHER. MAYBE THE SUN WILL RISE FROM THE WEST TOMORROW?

WELL, SINCE THEY INSIST, LET US NOT HOLD BACK AND GRACIOUSLY ACCEPT.

PLEASE, EAT TO YOUR HEART'S CONTENT!

DON'T MIND IF I DO!

AHAHAHA! AS EXPECTED FROM A FIERCE GENERAL TO HAVE A FIERCE APPETITE!

BRING MORE ALCOHOL IN!

NO WONDER THEY WERE BEING SO NICE.

IF WE CAN REALLY BE OF SERVICE TO YOU, THEN BY ALL MEANS WE SHALL HELP.

TO BE HONEST, I HAVE A FAVOUR TO ASK OF YOU.

NOW, GENERAL ZHANG BAO HAS TAKEN BASE IN THESE MOUNTAINS.

OHHH, THAT IS VERY PLEASING TO HEAR!

I WOULD LIKE YOU TO TAKE 3000 OF MY MEN AND ATTACK THEM.

WE MUST ASSAULT THEIR BASE ON THE MOUNTAINS SOMEHOW BUT SO FAR ALL OUR ATTEMPTS HAVE ENDED IN FAILURE.

LET US GO.

THANK YOU, I KNEW YOU WOULD BE RELIABLE.

THEN WE SHALL DEPART RIGHT AWAY, SIR.

ALRIGHT, FROM NOW YOU ARE TO TAKE ORDERS FROM LIU BEI.

YOU'RE RIGHT.
BROTHER, THE WEATHER IS ACTING A LITTLE STRANGE.

?
HMM?

SOMETHING SEEMS TO BE SPOOKING THE SOLDIERS. I'LL GO CHECK IT OUT.

WHAT'S THE MATTER, MEN?

THE ENEMY GENERAL CAN USE SORCERY?

WHAT?

COMMANDER ZHANG FEI, IT SEEMS THAT ZHANG BAO IS AT HIS SORCERY AGAIN.

HMPH!

THERE HAVE BEEN NO ONE TO SUCCESSFULLY BREACH THOSE MOUNTAINS.
YES. IT IS THE REASON WHY ALL OUR PREVIOUS ATTEMPTS HAVE FAILED.

NOW STOP PISSING YOURSELVES AND MARCH!

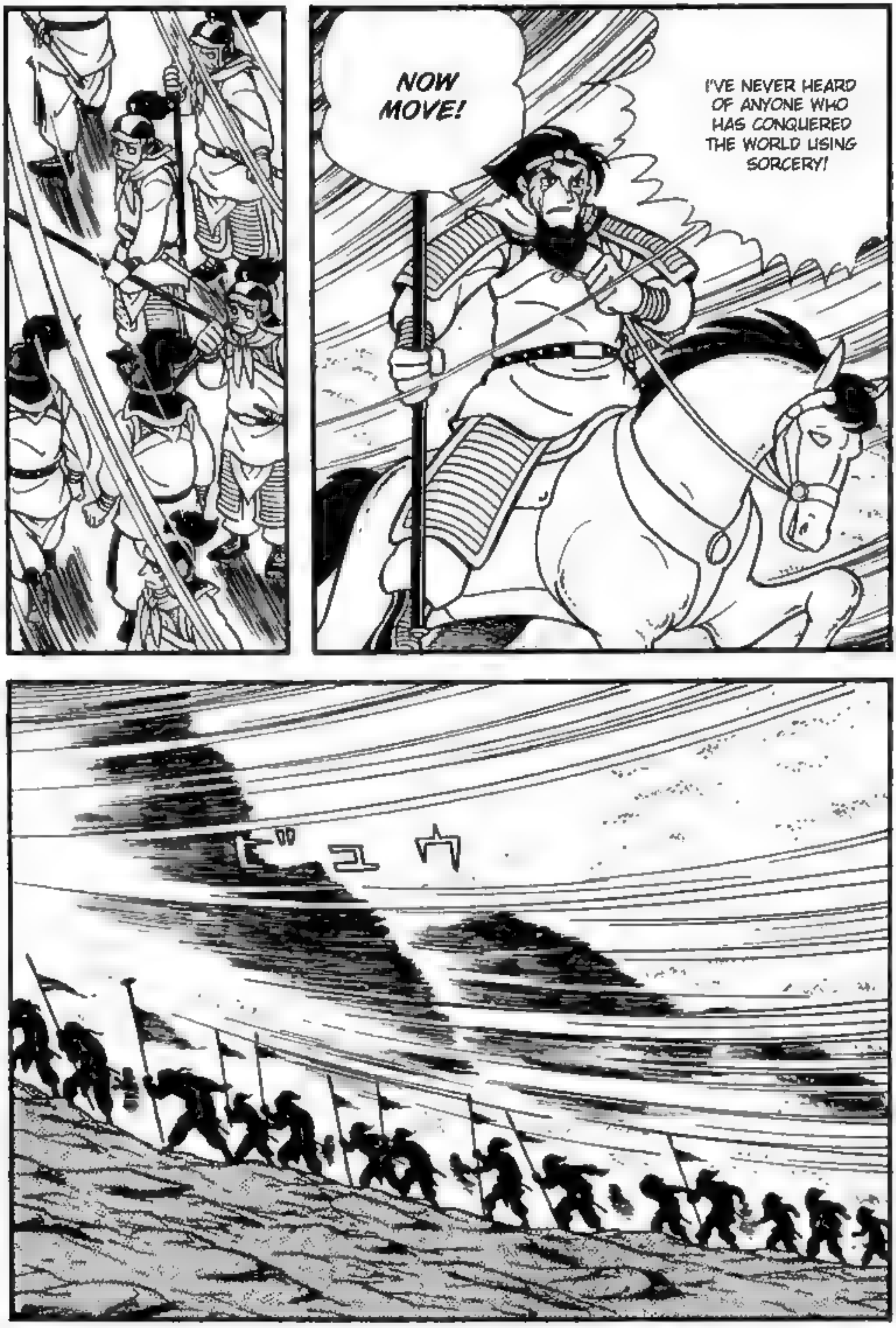
EVEN IF THAT WERE TRUE, WE CAN'T JUST PULL BACK NOW.

BUT HIS SORCERY WILL KILL US ALL...

LISTEN WELL MEN! THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS A PERSON BEING KILLED BY SORCERY. NOW CONTINUE MARCHING OR I SHALL TAKE YOUR HEAD.

AGHH!

INSTEAD OF SORCERY, YOU SHOULD FEAR MY BLADE. ONE SWING OF THIS AND 10 OF YOUR HEADS WILL BE FLYING!


NOW MOVE!
I'VE NEVER HEARD OF ANYONE WHO HAS CONQUERED THE WORLD USING SORCERY!

IT MIGHT BE WISER TO RETREAT FOR NOW...

COMMANDER LIU BEI, THAT IS THE RAVINE KNOWN AS THE "IRON GATES." IN THE PREVIOUS ATTACKS, OUR MEN COULD ADVANCE NO FURTHER AND ALL DIED AT THESE IRON GATES.

ALRIGHT, THEN LET MY VOLUNTEER ARMY TAKE THE LEAD AND CHARGE.

THAT'S ONLY BECAUSE YOUR FORCES WERE WEAK BUT IT'S DIFFERENT THIS TIME!

CHARGE!

SHIVER SHIVER

AGHH!

THEN I SHALL OPEN THEM FOR YOU!!

SO ANOTHER FOOLISH ARMY WANTS TO ENTER THROUGH THESE GATES OF HELL?

*OMINOUS LAUGHING SOUNDS

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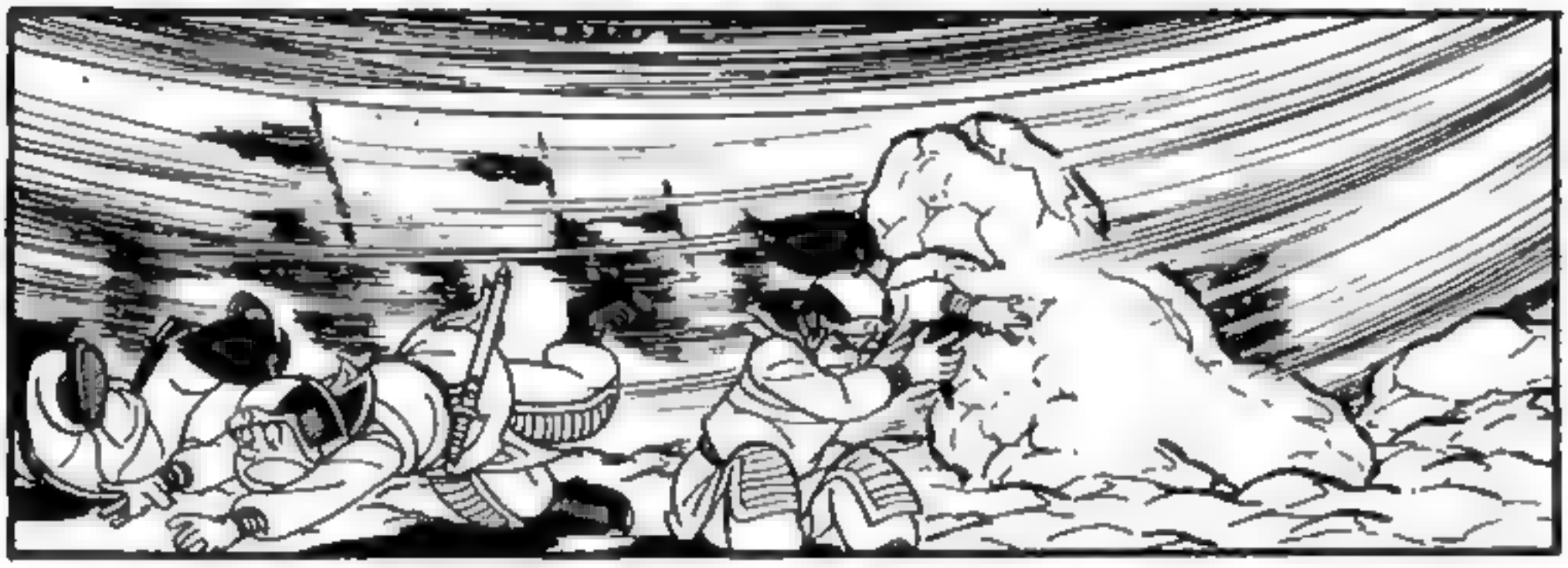
YOU CAN'T FIGHT AGAINST HIS SORCERY.

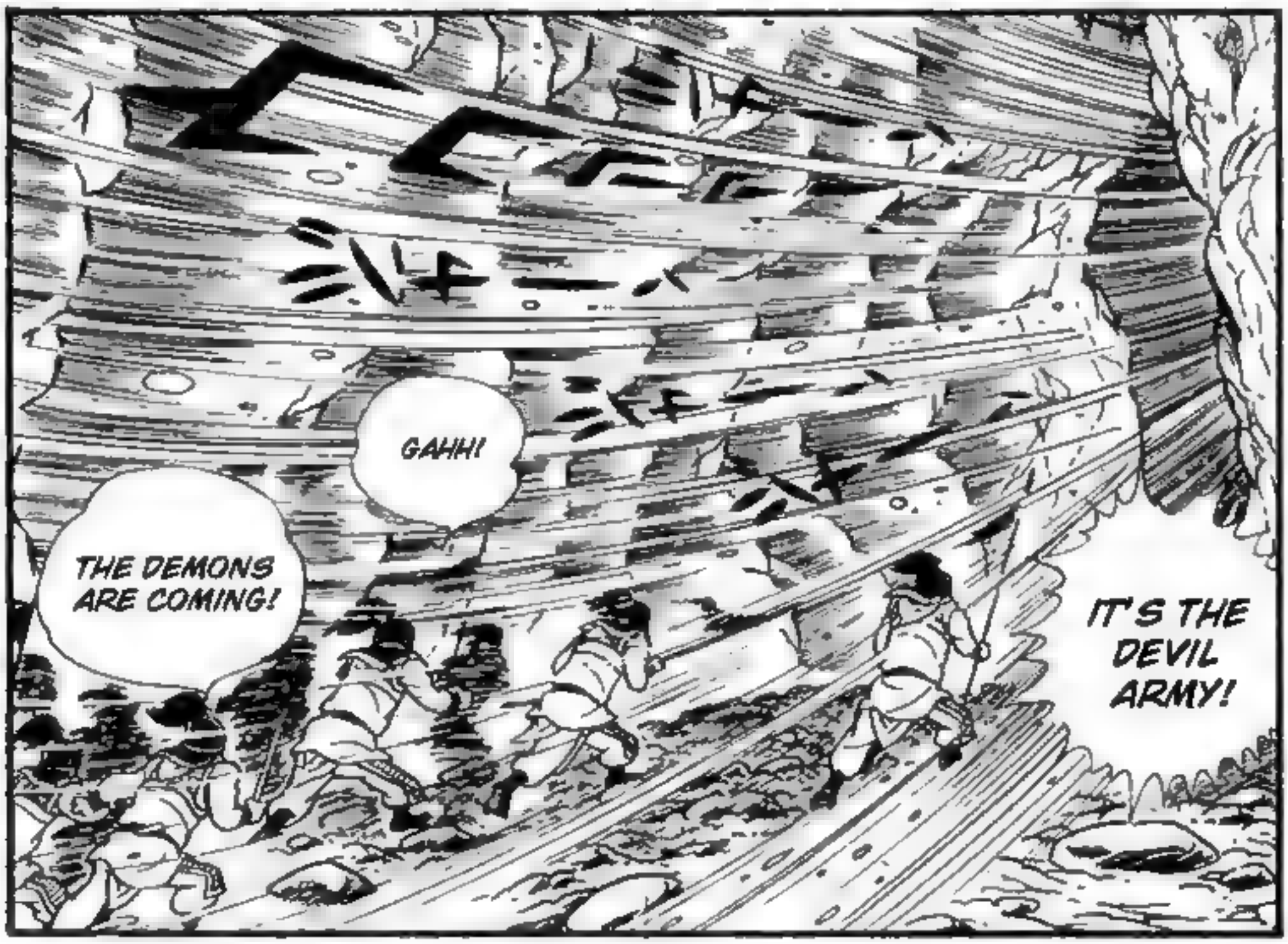
IT'S ZHANG BAO.

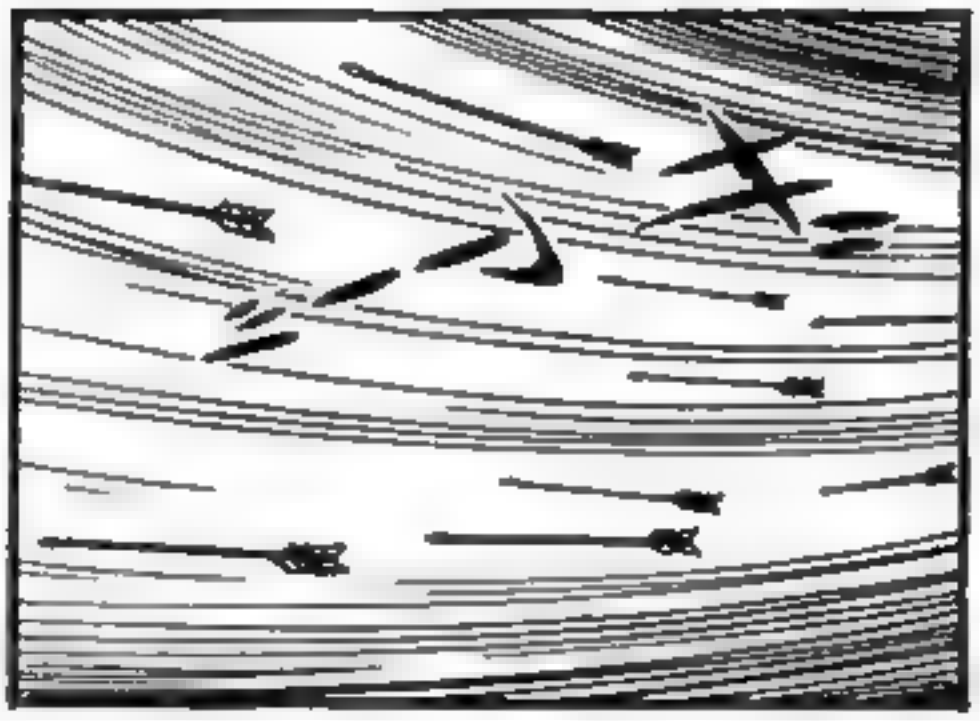
AGH!

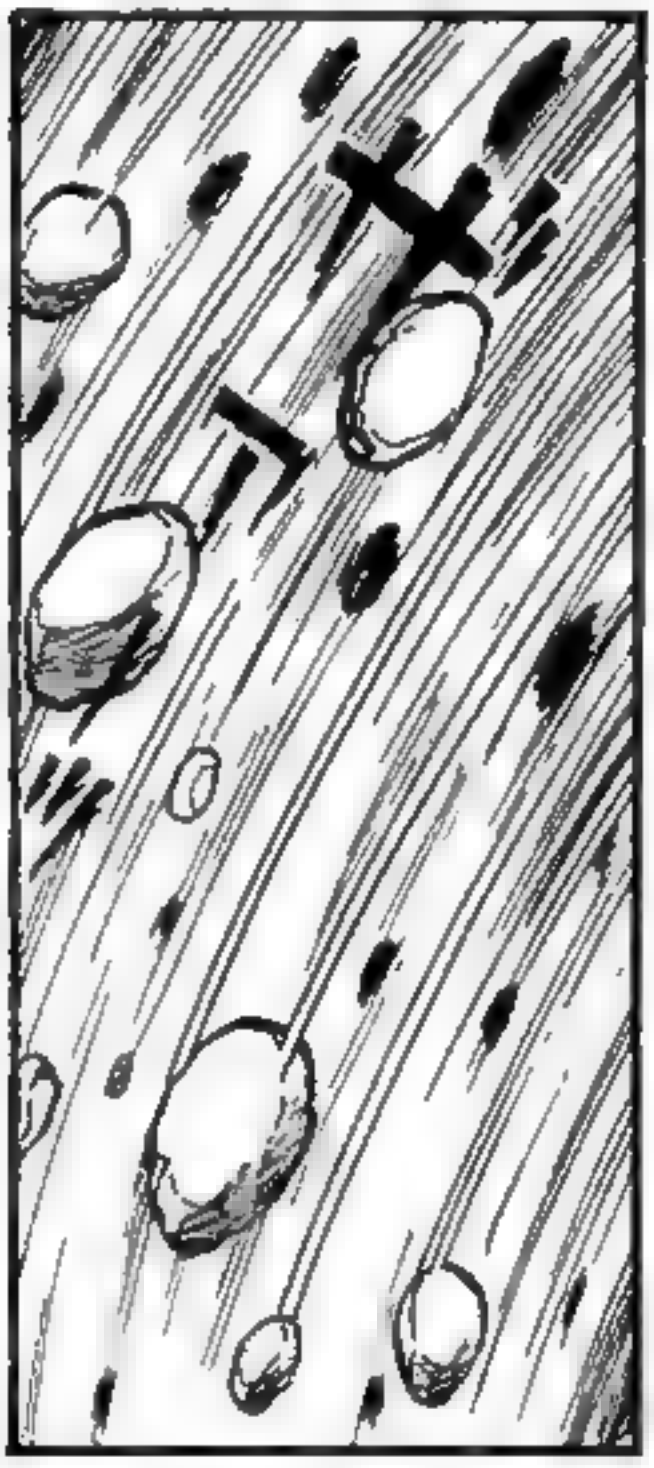


IF YOU DO NOT ADVANCE I SHALL CUT YOU DOWN.

YOU FOOLS, DON'T RUN AWAY! CHARGE!

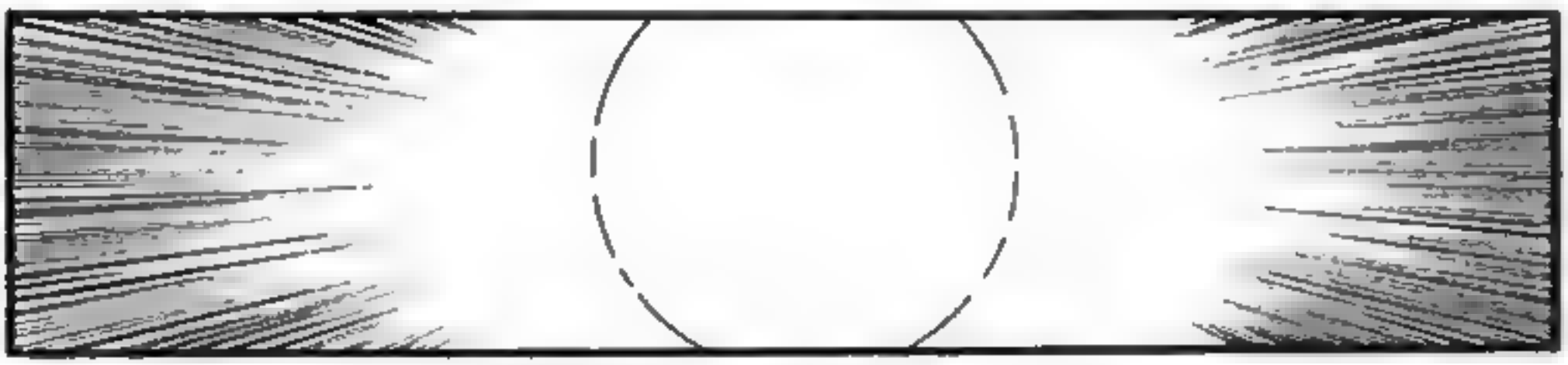

GAHH!
THE DEMONS ARE COMING!
IT'S THE DEVIL ARMY!





RETREAT!

YES.
BROTHER, WE CAN'T FIGHT LIKE THIS!!



THAT IS NO SORCERY.

HMM?

BUT TO SEE ZHU JUN'S MEN BECOMING AFRAID BEFORE THE BATTLE EVEN STARTS... IT SEEMS ZHANG BAO'S SORCERY IS NOT TO BE MADE LIGHT OF.

BROTHER, THIS IS VERY PROBLEMATIC. IT'S LIKE WE'RE BEING HUNTED AS SOON AS WE ENTER THE IRON GATES.

THERE ARE CONSTANT FOG AND CLOUDS HIGH ABOVE THE RAVINES. I'M SURE THE AIR CURRENT UP THERE IN THAT RAVINE SOMEHOW FLOWS BACK DOWN NATURALLY TRANS-FORMED AS STRONG WINDS.

IT'S DUE TO THE UNIQUE TOPOGRAPHY.

LOOK!

BUT EVEN IF WE EXPLAIN THAT TO OUR MEN, THEY PROBABLY WON'T BELIEVE US.

I SEE, A CRAFTY FELLOW HE IS.

THE ENEMY GENERAL ZHANG BAO IS TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THESE UNIQUE TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES AND PASSING IT OFF AS HIS SORCERY.

SO THIS IS WHY GENERAL ZHU JUN PUSHED THIS TASK ONTO US.

THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ANY.

ARE THERE ANY OTHER ROUTES TO CLIMB UP THE MOUNTAINS?

THEN WHAT TO DO...?

THERE AIN'T NOTHING TO THINK TOO DEEPLY ABOUT BROTHER. LET'S JUST SCALE THESE CLIFFS.

BUT IS THAT POSSIBLE?

IT'S BECAUSE IT LOOKS HARD TO CLIMB THAT THE ATTACK WILL BE EFFECTIVE IF WE DO SO.

BROTHER, IF IT LOOKED EASILY CLIMBABLE THAN IT WON'T MAKE FOR A VERY GOOD SURPRISE ATTACK.

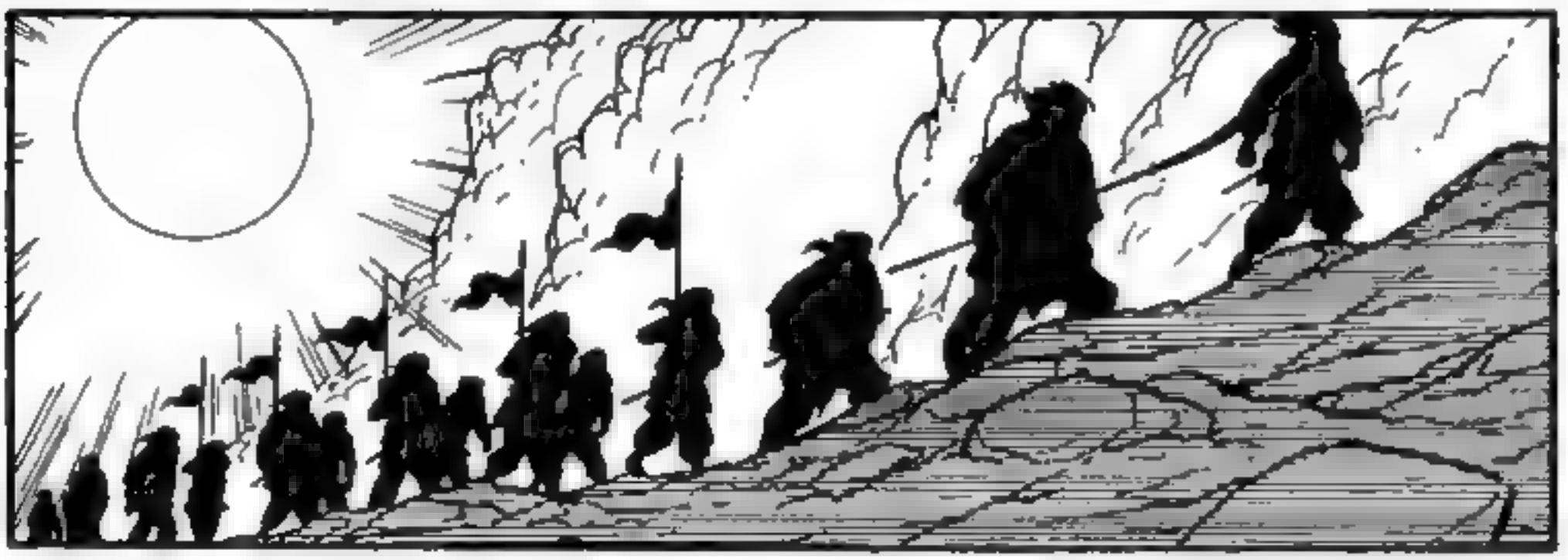
WHAT DO YOU MEAN "EVERY NOW AND THEN"?

HAHA, YOU CAN SAY SOME WISE THINGS EVERY NOW AND THEN.

ALRIGHT, LET'S GIVE IT A SHOT.

AS FOR MY VOLUNTEER ARMY, YOU'LL BE FOLLOWING ME.

ALRIGHT MEN. YOU DO NOT HAVE TO ENTER THE IRON GATES. INSTEAD, I WANT YOU TO RING THE GONG AND MAKE IT SEEM AS IF YOU'RE GOING TO ENTER IT AND ATTACK.



YOU'RE RIGHT.

WELL, HOW WAS THAT. NOT TOO BAD ONCE YOU ACTUALLY TRY CLIMBING IT, EH?

?

NOW LIGHT A SMALL FIRE.

JUST TRUST ME.

BUT WE WORKED SO HARD TO SNEAK AROUND THE ENEMY. WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING TO DO?

?

?

?

I HAVE JUST PRAYED TO THE GODS TO DISPEL THE EVIL SORCERY CAST BY ZHANG BAO. WITH THIS, HE IS NOW POWERLESS.

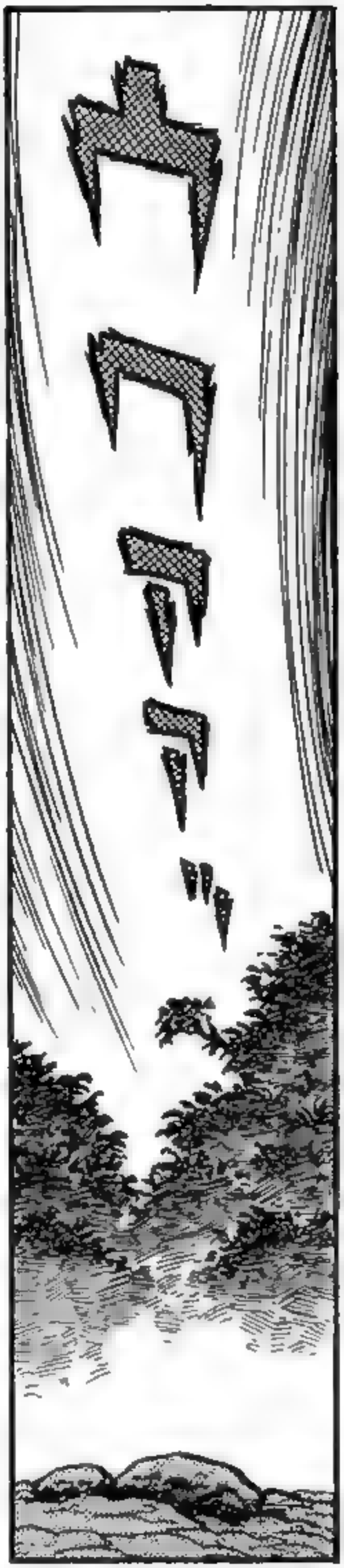
DID YOU SEE THAT, MY MEN!?

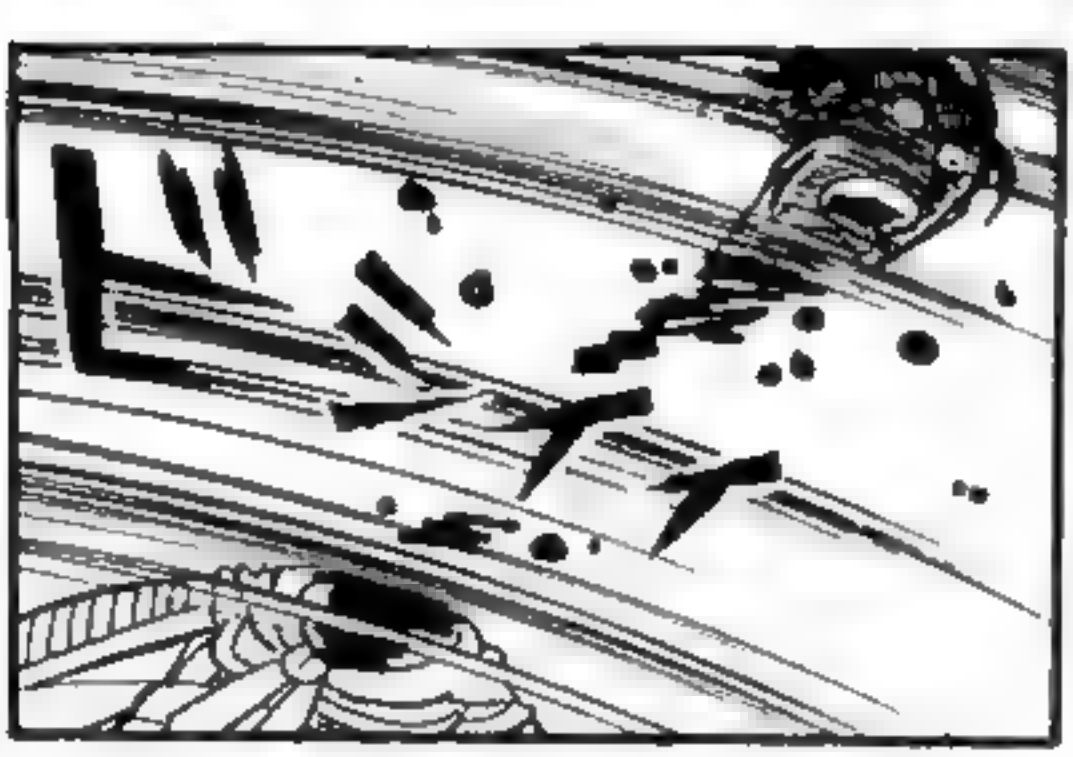
HE IS EVEN BETTER THAN I ORIGINALLY GAVE HIM CREDIT FOR.

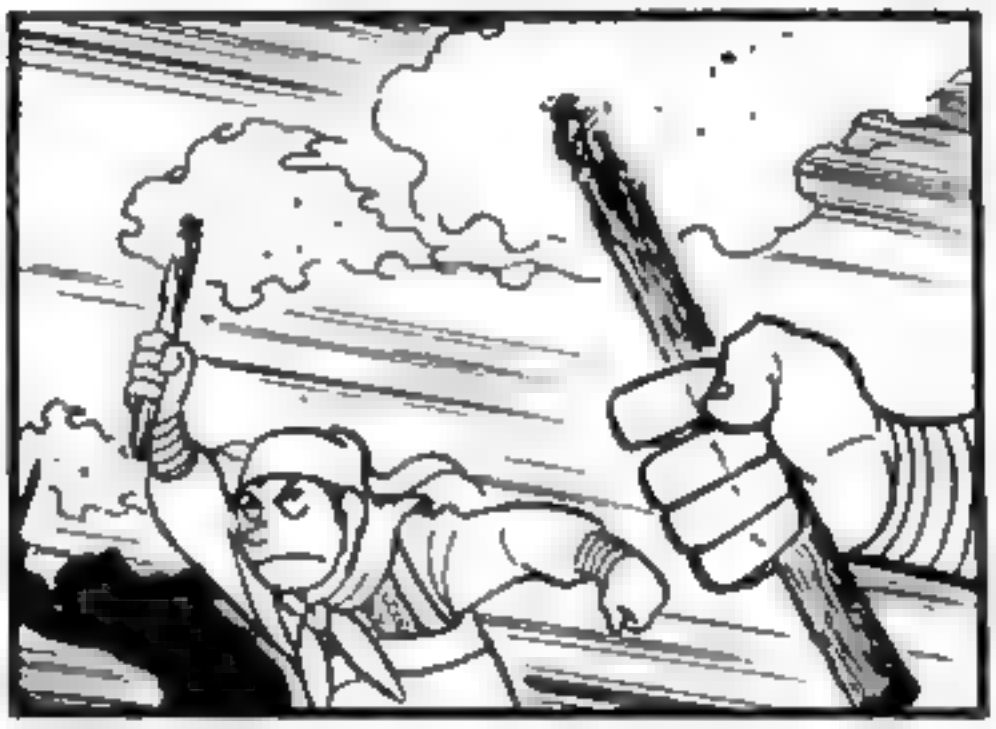
I SEE... BROTHER IS APPEALING TO THE SUPERSTITIOUS HEARTS OF MEN...

NOW FEAR NO MORE AND FIGHT COURAGEOUSLY!

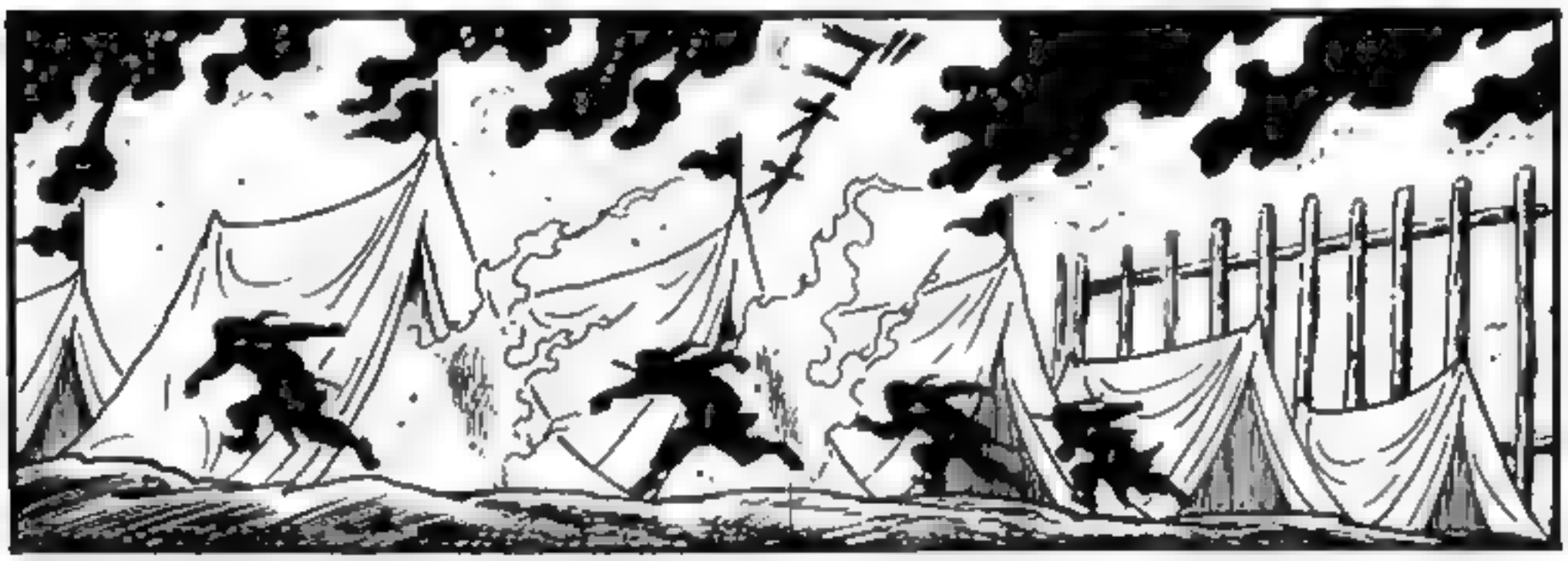
NOW LOOK! AREN'T THE SKIES THAT LOOKED SO MURKY BACK DOWN AT THE IRON GATES NOW PERFECTLY CLEAR?





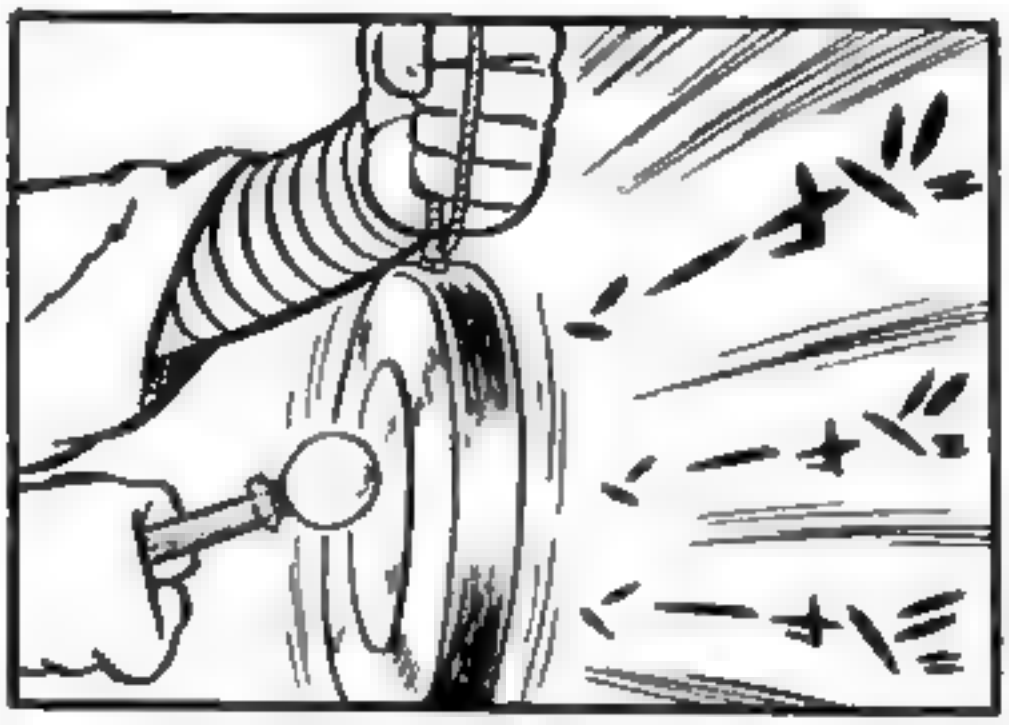


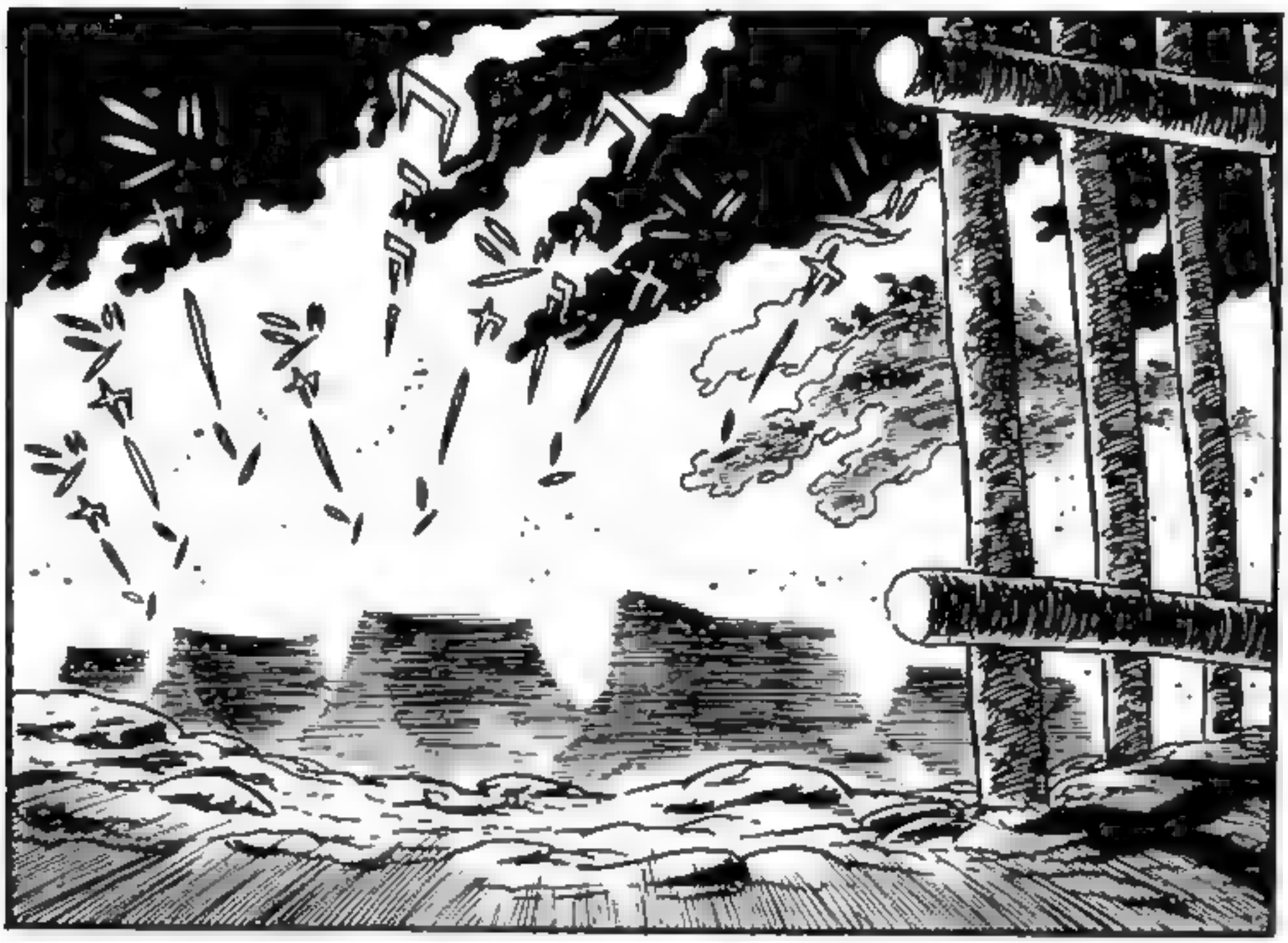
BURN DOWN
EVERYTHING!



TO THROW THE ENEMY IN CON-FUSION AND PANIC!

NOW RING THE GONGS AS LOUD AS POSSIBLE AND MAKE A RACKET.





SOLDIERS ARE ATTACKING FROM BEHIND US, SIR!

WHAT!

JUST WHAT EXACTLY IS GOING ON!?

WE CAN'T THINK OF ANY OTHER REASON BUT THAT...
HAVE SOME OF OUR OWN MEN TURNED ON US!?

PREPARE MY HORSE!

JUST WHO DARES TO REVOLT IN MY ARMY?

YES SIR!

ALRIGHT, YOU MEN STAY ON GUARD FOR A POSSIBLE ATTACK FROM THE FRONT!

AH!

OUR GENERAL HAS BEEN KILLED?

WHAT!?

I, LIU BEI XUANDE, HAVE BROUGHT DOWN THE YELLOW SCARF REBEL'S GENERAL OF THE LAND, ZHANG BAO!

THE ENEMY GENERAL ZHANG BAO HAS BEEN SHOT DOWN!

RUN AWAY!

IT'S OVER FOR US!

ESPECIALLY AFTER CLIMBING ALL THE WAY UP HERE!

I CAN'T LET YOU DO THAT NOW...

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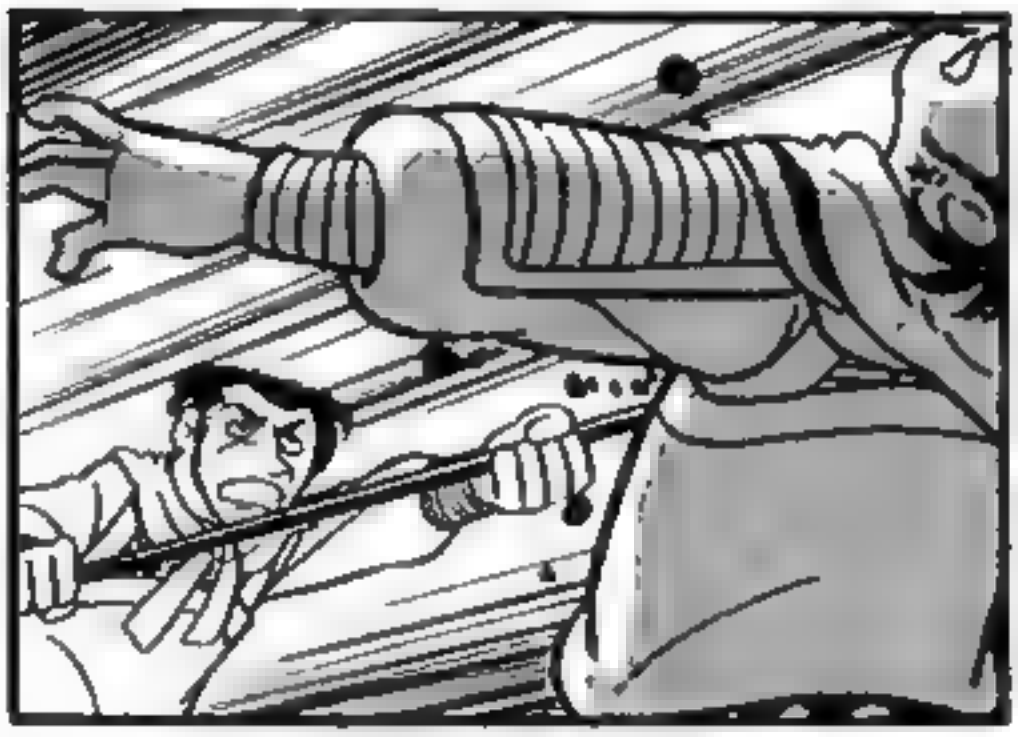
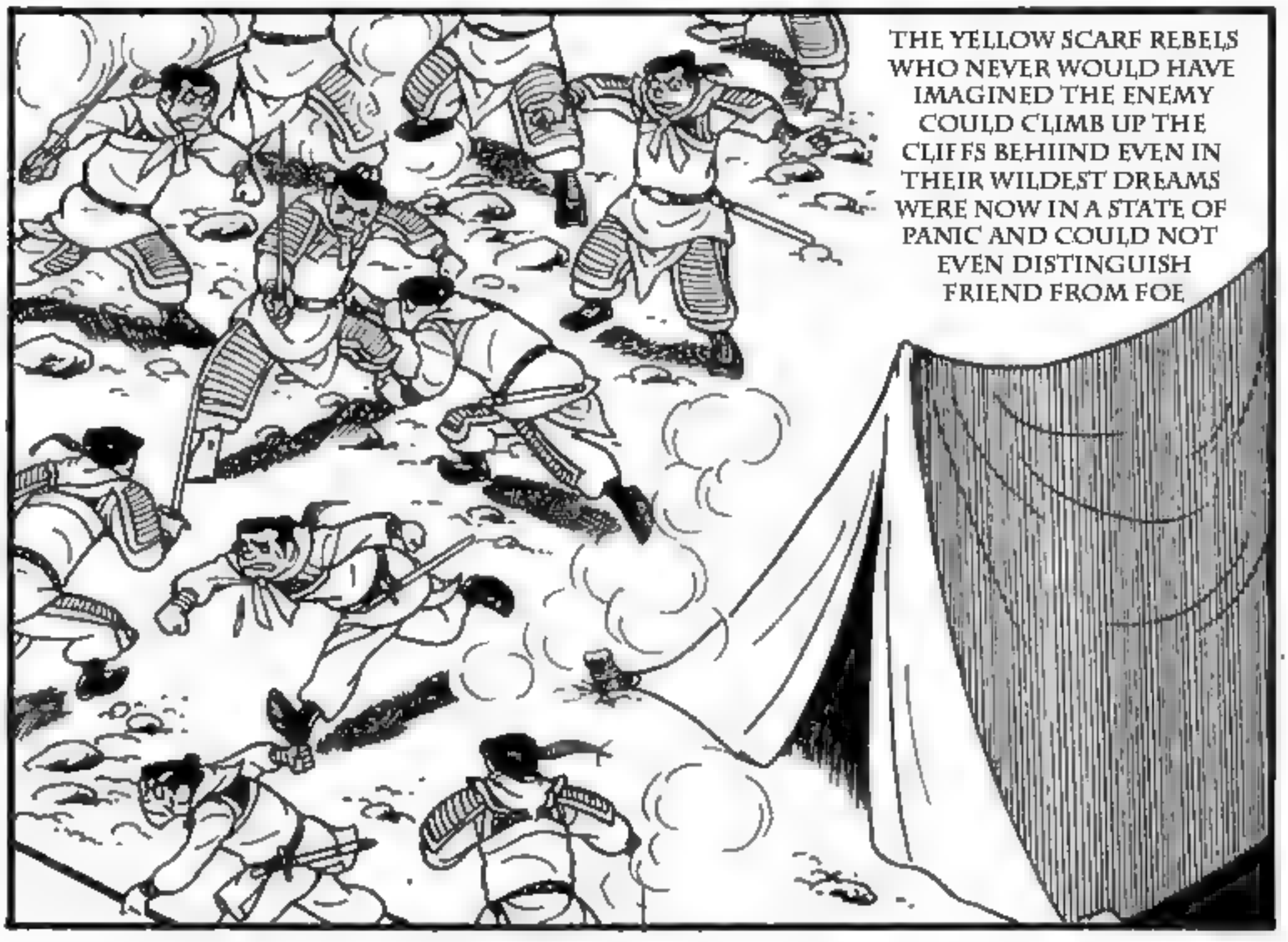
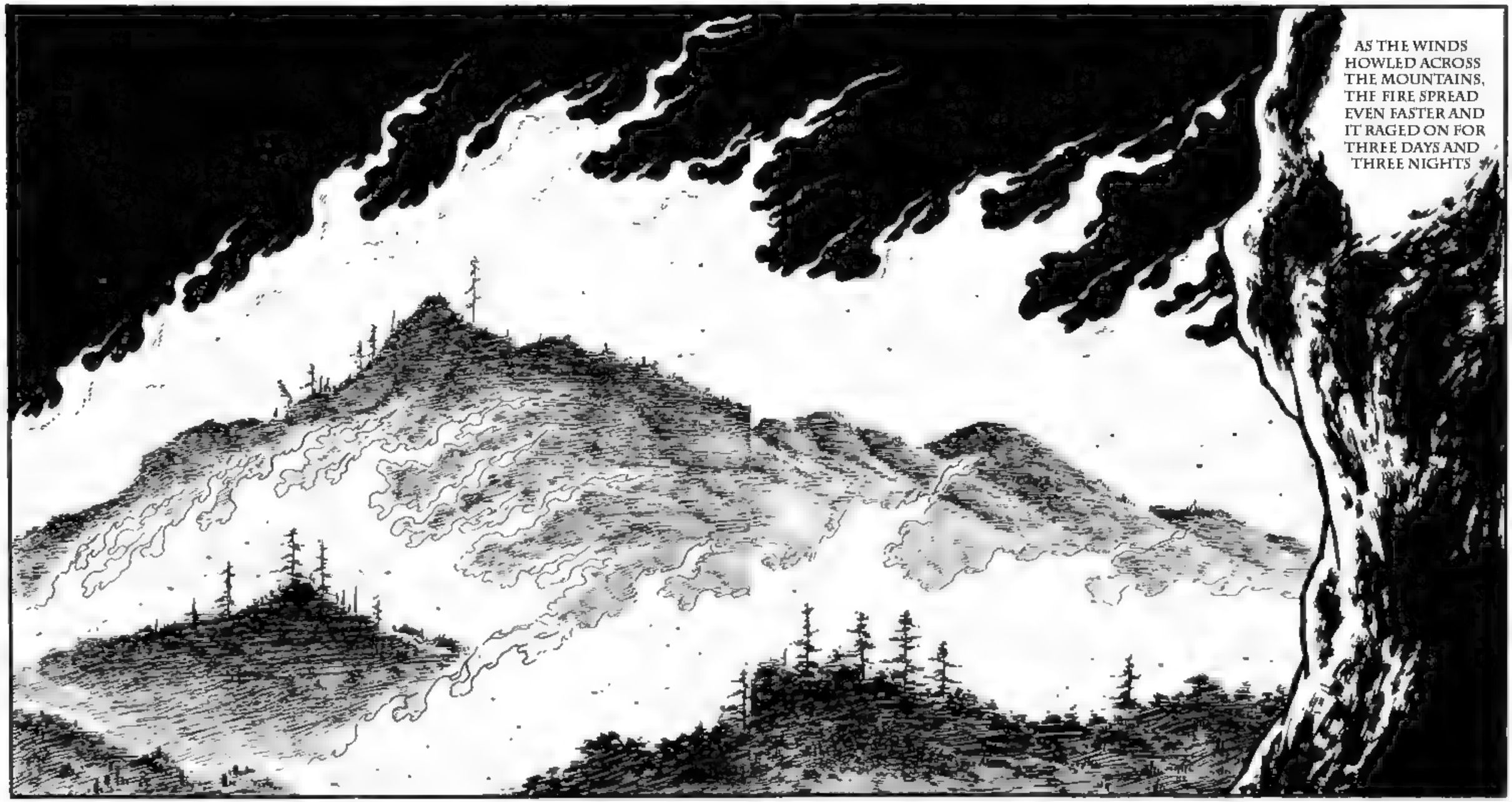



THE YELLOW SCARF REBELS WHO NEVER WOULD HAVE IMAGINED THE ENEMY COULD CLIMB UP THE CLIFFS BEHIIND EVEN IN THEIR WILDEST DREAMS WERE NOW IN A STATE OF PANIC AND COULD NOT EVEN DISTINGUISH FRIEND FROM FOE

EVEN THE RIVER TURNED BLOOD-RED

CONFUSED AND TERRIFIED BY THE SPREADING FIRE AND LACK OF LEADERSHIP, ONE BY ONE, THEY TURNED THEIR SWORDS AGAINST EACH OTHER.

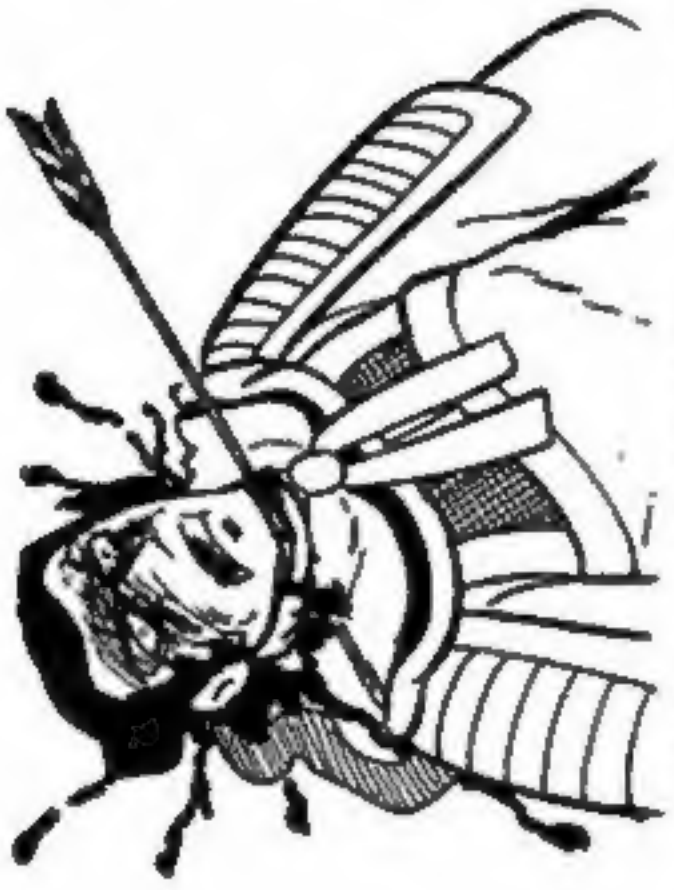

AS THE WINDS HOWLED ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS, THE FIRE SPREAD EVEN FASTER AND IT RAGED ON FOR THREE DAYS AND THREE NIGHTS

THE NUMBERS OF DEAD REBELS FROM ATTACKS BY OTHER REBELS TURNING ON EACH OTHER AND BY LIU BEI'S VOLUNTEER ARMY NUMBERED 10,000.

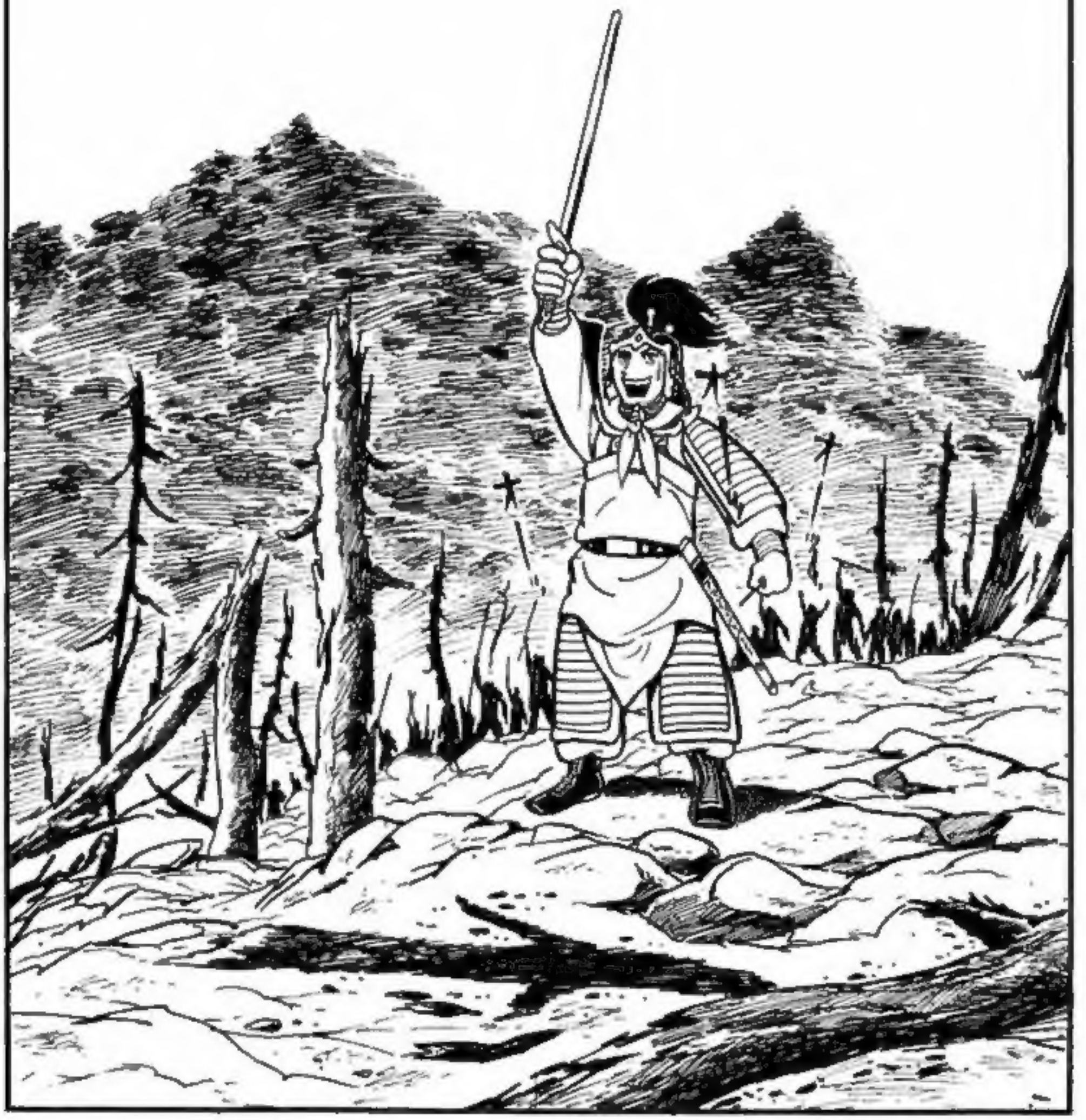
AND THE REBELS WHO BURNED TO DEATH NUMBERED FAR TOO MANY TO BE COUNTED.

AND THAT VERY SAME ZHANG BAO, MET HIS END AND DIED IN THIS BATTLE....

THE YELLOW SCARF REBELS WERE LED BY THE GENERAL OF HEAVEN ZHANG JIAO. NEXT IN COMMAND WERE ZHANG LIAO, GENERAL OF THE PEOPLE, AND ZHANG BAO, GENERAL OF THE LAND. THESE TWO GENERALS WERE ESSENTIALLY THE RIGHT AND LEFT HANDS OF ZHANG JIAO IN TERMS OF IMPORTANCE.



ZHANG BAO AND HIS
REBEL FORCES NUMBERING
IN THE TENS OF THOUSANDS
WERE DEFEATED BY THE
SO-CALLED "WORTHLESS"
VOLUNTEER ARMY OF
LIU BEI XUANDE.



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横山 光輝

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